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IAF slams Wye River accord

AMMAN (AFP) — The Islamic Action Front (IAF), lashed out Sunday at the Israeli-Palestinian peace deal signed Friday as an "aggressive act" against the Palestinians. "We reject and condemn this agreement and consider it to represent an act of aggression against the Palestinian people," said a statement from the IAF, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan. "The Palestinian people will pay a heavy price for this accord in terms of security, unity, their rights of their children and their right to resist the occupation," the statement said. The Kingdom's largest political party also warned that "anyone who opposes the Palestinian right to resist... will be standing among the enemy's ranks." Israeli and Palestinian leaders signed the accord in Washington on Friday following nine days of drawn-out talks, restoring momentum to the stalled regional peace process after a 19-month hiatus.

Mubarak telephones King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received a telephone call from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak who inquired the King's condition and wished him a speedy recovery. The two leaders reviewed the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed in Washington on Friday and spearheaded by U.S. President Bill Clinton. Mubarak voiced appreciation of the King's efforts toward the conclusion of the agreement. The King and the Egyptian leader expressed support for the Palestinian National Authority in its endeavours to help the Palestinian people regain their rights. Also Sunday, Mrs. Mubarak telephoned Her Majesty Queen Noor to wish the King a quick recovery and safe return home. King Hussein called President Clinton and expressed his appreciation of the American administration's efforts that enabled the Palestinians and the Israelis to reach the agreement.

Netanyahu wants no deadline for final status talks with Palestinians

WASHINGTON (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, who signed a pact agreeing to start final peace negotiations with the Palestinians, left Washington on Sunday saying the May 4 deadline to complete the last phase should be ignored.

In a wide-ranging interview with Reuters before leaving for Israel, Netanyahu said he was grateful to President Bill Clinton for his "helping hand" in negotiating the deal with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat but expressed bitterness that Clinton refused his plea for the immediate release from prison of an Israeli spy.

The prime minister, who faces angry rebukes from Israeli critics of the *interim* accord at a nine-day summit at the Wye Plantation in rural Maryland, confidently predicted that it would be ratified by a "sizeable majority" in the 120-member Knesset.

A key element of the interim agreement calls for negotiations to begin almost immediately on so-called "final status" issues that include establishing borders and determining control of Jerusalem. Under agreements reached in Oslo in 1993 and 1995, the talks are to be completed by May 4,1999.

Netanyahu brushed aside the deadline as meaningless, even though Arafat has threatened to declare an independent Palestinian state if agreement is not reached by then.

"No deadline of Oslo has been met, none, not one," Netanyahu said. "Oslo is not about deadlines, Oslo is about at the end coming to an uninterrupted and continuous negotiation to achieve a balanced peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

"The Palestinians ought to have the means to run their own lives but none of the powers to threaten Israel's life. That is the challenge before us," he said.

"You do not get to do it or not do it by a deadline," Netanyahu said. "You extend deadlines and we've done that throughout the Oslo process and there's no reason why not to do it here." The prime minister warned that "if the Palestinians unilaterally terminate the negotiations, unilaterally make a determination about statehood, Israel can't be expected to not take unilateral action on its own.

"This would be, I think, bad for the Palestinians and bad for peace. I hope the experience of Wye tells us that the right way to go and the only way to go is negotiations for peace."

Netanyahu sounded somewhat bitter in discussing his failed bid to win the release of Jonathan Pollard, who since 1987 has been serving a life sentence for using his job as a navy analyst to pass secrets to Israel.

The release of Pollard became a last-minute stumbling block in the peace talks, delaying a final agreement.

Clinton agreed to open a review of the Pollard case, even though he turned down a request for his release in 1996. Asked if he had an understanding with Clinton about an eventual release, the Israeli leader said: "I'm not going to get into it. The president did say at the end of the talks that he would enter into a review process, and I hope this review will produce the release of Pollard."

"He's served his time," Netanyahu said of Pollard. "He did something terribly wrong in what he did, but he did not do that in order to hurt the United States but to assist Israel, to give us information, for example, about Saddam Hussein and Iraq."

Acknowledging that he had hoped Pollard would be allowed to return to Israel with him, Netanyahu complained about the high-stakes political risks he took to reach the interim accord and said he felt Clinton could have freed Pollard in return.

"I'd hoped that this would be a juncture at which he would be released," Netanyahu said. "I have been asked to take very, very difficult decisions. I put my own personal political future at risk. I've been asked to cede part of my homeland to the Palestinians and I was asked to release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, many of whom commited security offences against the people of Israel.

"Everyone could have contributed something. I'd hoped the United States would find a way, and I still do, that they would find mercy in their hearts after 13 years of solitary confinement to forgive and let this man go to Israel," he said.

Asked if he was disappointed he was returning to Israel without Pollard, who has developed a hero's status among many Israelis, Netanyahu said, "Yes I am. I am leaving in this sense, and only in this sense, with a disappointment."

HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, holds talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa late Saturday in the port city of Aqaba in the presence of Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Zeid Rifai, Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib and other senior Jordanian and Egyptian officials (Photo by Boghos)

Jordan, Egypt call for timetable to implement Wye agreement

AQABA (J.T.) — Jordan and Egypt have described the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed in Washington on Friday as an important step forward, and called for its implementation in accordance with a given timetable.

The two sides' views were expressed by HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa at a meeting in Aqaba to review the agreement reached Friday following the Wye River meetings in Maryland.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said "the two sides considered the Washington deal as an important step on the way to reaching a comprehensive peace in the region."

Petra said the two sides "underlined the importance of total commitment to the implementation of the deal in accordance with the given timetable so that it can lead to a comprehensive peace based on mutual respect and safeguarding the rights of all parties."

During the Aqaba meeting held Saturday evening, Musa delivered to Prince Hassan a verbal message from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak dealing with bilateral relations and developments in the peace process.

Musa conveyed to the Regent Mubarak's deep appreciation of the role played by His Majesty King Hussein in the conclusion of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

The agency quoted Prince Hassan and Musa as emphasising the importance of the next meeting of the Higher Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee co-chaired by the prime ministers of the two countries, noting that the committee will focus on joint projects.

They also emphasised the importance of developing inter-Arab relations and safeguarding higher Arab national interests.

In this respect the Crown Prince stressed Jordan's standing policy of seeking to bolster inter-Arab relations on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation. He said the essence of such relations should not be negatively affected due to differences in approach.

The talks continued at a dinner the Regent hosted in honour of Musa and his accompanying delegation. The dinner was attended by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, Speaker of the Senate Zeid Rifai, Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib, Minister of Information Nasser Judeh and other officials.

Musa had earlier met in Amman with Khatib to review bilateral relations. The Egyptian minister delivered a lecture on developments in the region to the Arab Thought Forum.

He left for Egypt from Aqaba and was seen off by Khatib and other Jordanian officials.

Jewish settlers protest but most Israelis like deal

TEL AVIV (R) — Hundreds of Jewish settlers took to the streets on Sunday in anger at Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's peace deal with the Palestinians while an opinion poll showed three-quarters of Israelis backed him.

Hardliners on the right who helped elect Netanyahu in 1996 said they would work together with leftist opposition leaders to bring elections forward to February or March 1999 from the scheduled 2000.

"Bibi, the Palestinians made fools of you," read one banner held up by settlers who blocked West Bank traffic with sit-down protests against the accord that Netanyahu, known as "Bibi," signed with President Yasser Arafat on Friday.

"Netanyahu is no good for the Jews," settler leader Yisrael Harel told army radio when asked the dominant feeling among leaders of the 160,000 Jews living in settlements scattered among the 1.5 million Palestinians of the West Bank.

Police detained 27 demonstrators who blocked traffic and resisted arrest during protests against the accord signed in the United States. The deal gave Palestinians a further 13 per cent of the West Bank, captured by Israel in the 1967 Middle East war.

Right-wingers using the slogan "We're switching prime ministers" planned protests along Netanyahu's route from Ben-Gurion Airport to occupied Jerusalem on his return later in the day.

In the Arab east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud, Israelis tried to clear a path for a fence around a planned settlement. Police stopped their bulldozer in its tracks, demanding to see a permit for the construction.

A new opinion poll showed that 74 per cent of Israelis believed Netanyahu was right to sign the deal outlining a 12-week phased handover of land in return for Palestinian implementation of previous security commitments.

The Dahaf survey of 505 adults, taken on Saturday night for the Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper, showed 18 per cent believed Netanyahu was wrong while eight per cent had no opinion.

Netanyahu was also expected to win majority support when he submits the accord to his cabinet in the next few days and to get backing later from more than 90 of the 120 members of Knesset, Israel's parliament.

Opposition Labour Party leader Ehud Barak vowed to support the right-wing Netanyahu for making the agreement, but Netanyahu's tenuous 61-59 majority in the 120-seat Knesset put him at risk in later votes on other issues.

Lawmakers left and right predicted an election in February or March.

But Arye Deri, leader of the moderate ultra-Orthodox Shas Party in the government, said he could see no point in advancing elections since, as he saw it, Netanyahu was likely to end up the winner again anyway.

Hardliners pledged to run someone loyal to their cause against Netanyahu. Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan, a former army chief who leads the far-right Tsomet Party, said he was one politician ready to challenge Netanyahu.

Other names raised were Binyamin Ze'ev Begin, the son of Likud founder Menachem Begin, and Uzi Landau, a Likud lawmaker who heads the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee.

Netanyahu effectively neutralised his likeliest challenger ahead of the summit by appointing political hawk Ariel Sharon as his foreign minister. Settlers felt betrayed by Sharon, an ex-general who was once the darling of their movement.

"The opposition of the right without Sharon is not the same as the opposition with Sharon," Israel Radio's political correspondent Yaron Dekel said.

Arafat urges Israel to respect both spirit, letter of agreement

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat called on Israel to respect both "the spirit and the letter" of the Wye River agreement as he started a Middle East tour Sunday to brief Arab leaders.

"I hope that Israel will respect both the spirit and the letter of the agreement so we can say we have relaunched the peace process and protected the peace of the brave," Arafat told reporters at Cairo airport.

He was speaking after meeting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on the first stage of a tour to brief Arab leaders on the new peace agreement he signed Friday with Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu at the White House.

Unlike His Majesty King Hussein, Mubarak played no direct part in the marathon nine-day talks at Wye River outside Washington and Egyptian officials have been strikingly sceptical about the agreement's chances of success.

Mubarak was noticeably lukewarm in his welcome for the agreement compared with other pro-Western Arab leaders. "The agreement was accepted by the Palestinians, and so we are happy with it too," he said after the signing.

Egyptian officials have expressed particular concern about the difficulties of implementing the agreement on the ground.

Mubarak aide, Usama Al Baz, told reporters Sunday that Egypt wanted to see "an active U.S. role in the implementation of the agreement."

The agreement must be put into practice for one to be able "to look to the future with hope," he said.

The Cairo government-owned press gave a gloomy assessment of the prospects.

"The position the Palestinians have got themselves into and the state of disillusion the Arab World has reached do not favour implementation of the agreement," wrote columnist Salama Ahmad Salama in the influential daily Al Ahram.

"The Palestinians are the weakest link in the Arab-Israeli conflict — it's why they always pay the highest price — and they truly paid an exorbitant price at Wye Plantation," said the leader writer in Al Jumhouriya, run by a close Mubarak aide.

Palestinian officials called for Egyptian involvement alongside the United States in overseeing the agreement's implementation.

"President Mubarak can play a major role in the implementation," the Palestinian National Authority's international cooperation minister, Nabil Shaath, said adding that the Egyptian leader had already raised the issue with the Israeli prime minister.

"President Mubarak told Mr. Netanyahu that if he implements the agreement, this would be good, and if he does not, this will complicate things still more," Shaath said.

When Netanyahu telephoned Mubarak to brief him on the agreement Saturday, the Egyptian leader urged him to "show good faith" in its implementation, Egyptian state television reported.

Another Palestinian official, Arafat aide Tayeb Abdul Rahim, told the Egyptian government daily Al Ahram Sunday that the Israelis had yet to provide maps of the fresh West Bank withdrawal they had agreed to at the Wye River summit.

"The Israelis have refused to give us the maps on the basis that they have yet to receive cabinet approval," Abdul Rahim told the paper.

He said the Palestinians were concerned "the issue might become a focus of dispute which could hamper the launch of implementation" of the agreement.

Palestinian officials in Gaza City said Arafat would fly to Morocco Sunday to brief King Hassan II, before travelling on to Tunisia and Saudi Arabia.

"I am going to discuss developments with fraternal Arab leaders," the Palestinian leader told reporters, adding that his talks with the Egyptian president had been "positive."

Arafat arrived here Saturday from Austria, where he briefed European Union leaders on the Wye River talks hosted by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Joint Jordanian-Yemeni committee begins meeting

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Jordanian-Yemeni Joint Committee on Sunday opened a two-day meeting in Amman to discuss implementing bilateral projects, bolstering economic ties and promoting trade exchanges between the two countries.

The Jordanian side to the meeting is led by Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh, while the Yemeni side is headed by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Iryani, who arrived in Amman yesterday accompanied by a Yemeni delegation.

The two sides, who will examine a report submitted by a joint ministerial committee that held meetings in Amman last week to prepare the agenda for the higher committee, are scheduled to sign the minutes of deliberations today and are also expected to address a press conference.

In welcoming remarks to the Yemeni delegation at the airport, Tarawneh said the leaderships of the two countries are determined to expand the scope of bilateral cooperation in all fields.

Tarawneh added that the 14 protocols and agreements to be signed today cover joint projects to help achieve economic integration.

For his part, Iryani expressed hope that the protocols and agreements would pave the way for stronger ties.

The higher committee's agenda was prepared by a ministerial committee co-chaired by Minister of Industry and Trade Mohammad Saleh Hourani and Yemeni Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Mathar Sa'idi. The Yemeni minister noted that the committee developed recommendations for increasing the volume of trade, establishing a direct maritime shipping line between Yemen and Jordan and encouraging the private sectors of the two countries to carry out joint projects.

The two sides are expected to sign agreements allowing each country to sell the other up to $10 million worth of goods free from customs duties in addition to normal trade exchanges, avoiding dual taxation and creating a free trade zone as well as a protocol on cooperation in technical fields.

Peace treaty anniversary far from festive

By Alia A. Toukan

NEWS ANALYSIS

AMMAN — Few in Jordan are indifferent to Metri Twal. He is either condemned or cheered for his dealings with Israel.

The general manager of Five Continents Travel, the sales agent of the Israeli air carrier El Al in Amman, has always believed in peace, he says.

"I love a challenge and going against the stream. I have always believed in peace since I was a kid. Working with El Al is fulfilling my dream of peaceful coexistence," he quips.

But not many in Jordan echo Twal's sentiments. At least not publicly.

Jordan today marks four years of the signing of its peace treaty with Israel, but analysts and politicians say while there may be reason to "celebrate" relatively smooth official political relations, there is little to cheer on the people-to-people front.

In the past few years, successive governments have forged ahead with the so-called normalisation process with Israel, signing numerous bilateral agreements on trade, water, transportation, and agriculture, but few projects have actually left the drawing board.

Although there are no actual statistics available, the impression among politicians and analysts alike is that the general population in Jordan, over half of which is of Palestinian origin, has been reluctant to follow the government's lead.

The reasons vary depending on who is asked. Those opposed to normalisation have argued that relations between Israel and the Arab World can never be "normal" until the Palestinians regain their rights and an independent Palestinian state is established. Within this camp, some have said that even if these conditions are met, relations will still never be normal considering the decades of bloodshed.

Those few who have ventured into dealing with Israel and have "come out of the closet" attribute the slow progress of normalisation to the "shame culture" in Jordan that stigmatises anyone who has had any contact with the Jewish state.

Former chief of the Royal Court, Adnan Abu Odeh, argues that normalisation is on the rise, albeit slowly and quietly. "There is an undercurrent that is going on without any notice... If Israel is less rigid in its measures, especially in relation to trade, then normalisation will move much faster."

The hard-line policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu, elected in May 1996, have done little to alleviate stereotypes harboured by many in the Kingdom about their western neighbours, as well as the unease felt by the "normalisers."

Since the standstill in the peace process, only recently broken at the Wye Plantation talks in the U.S. resulting in Friday's Palestinian-Israeli agreement, Twal has found it increasingly difficult to justify his work, he says.

"I feel more at ease with myself now than I have in the past 18 months," says Twal.

(Continued on page 12)

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BALANCE SHEET AS OF 30 JUNE 1998 AND 1997

Assets	1998 US$ ('000)	1997 US$ ('000)
Cash and due from banks	5 873 007	5 882 535
Government and trading securities	1 140 718	953 624
Loans and advances, net	7 789 448	7 087 599
Long-term investments, net	1 763 958	1 523 818
Fixed assets, net	142 486	108 950
Other assets	452 882	359 591
Total Assets	**17 162 499**	**15 916 117**
Customers' liability on guarantees, letters of credit and other contingencies	5 749 088	5 203 701
Total	**22 911 587**	**21 119 818**

Liabilities and Shareholders' Equity	1998 US$ ('000)	1997 US$ ('000)
Customer deposits	11 381 248	10 571 772
Bank deposits	3 180 651	3 004 504
Other liabilities	1 042 473	953 143
Total Liabilities	**15 604 372**	**14 529 419**
Capital	146 937	84 897
Statutory reserve	79 532	78 766
Voluntary reserve	196 285	218 836
General reserve	853 487	738 626
Reserves with associated companies	343 378	310 944
Retained earnings	2 220	483
Total	**1 621 839**	**1 432 552**
Translation adjustments	(63 712)	(45 854)
Total shareholders' equity	**1 558 127**	**1 386 698**
Total liabilities and shareholders' equity	**17 162 499**	**15 916 117**
Guarantees, letters of credit and other contingencies	5 749 088	5 203 701
Total	**22 911 587**	**21 119 818**

Net profit for the period ended 30 June 1998 and 30 June 1997 was included in "Other Liabilities"

Income Statement for the period ended 30 June 1998 and 1997

	1998 US$ ('000)	1997 US$ ('000)
Net interest and commission	**260 140**	**230 997**
Plus : Foreign exchange trading	20 905	14 841
Other income	24 545	16 803
	305 590	**262 641**
Less : General and administrative expenses	142 588	127 470
Net income before tax	163 002	135 171
Income tax	37 286	26 606
Net income	**125 716**	**108 565**

Sister, Subsidiary and Associated Companies

Arab Bank	Percentage of Ownership
Arab Bank (Switzerland) -Zurich,Geneva	100%
Arab Bank Australia -Sydney	100%
Arab Bank (Austria) AG -Vienna	100%
Arab Bank AG - Frankfurt/Germany	100%
Islamic International Arab Bank	100%
Finance, Accountancy, Mohassaba S.A	100%
Arab Tunisian Bank-Tunis	64%
Arab Palestinian Investment Bank, Palestine	55%
Oman Arab Bank-Oman	49%
Arab National Bank-Saudi Arabia	40%
Arabia Insurance co., Lebanon	37%
Egyptian Financial Group For Portofolio managment	33%
Commercial Building Co., Lebanon	30%

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TRAINING IN SUDAN: Members of the Sudanese Popular Defence Force militia yell slogans Sunday within a training camp for soldiers within the southern garrison town of Juba. Aid agencies will be testifying in front of the United Nations Security Council next week to discuss the humanitarian cost of the 15-year civil war in Sudan, which has left an estimated 1.5 million dead and four million displaced (Reuters photo)

Failures in human relations, peaceful coexistence mark 20th century — Regent

By Alla Shukri Hamzeh

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, described the 20th century, marked by its achievements in science and technology, as one that will be remembered for its "colossal failures in the realm of human relations" and for "great disappointments in the quest for justice and peaceful coexistence on the planet Earth."

"Whereas our interaction with nature and science has produced amazing developments in industrialisation and urbanisation... there have been no similar achievements in man's interaction with his fellow man," he added.

In an address delivered on his behalf by Minister of State for Development Affairs Taher Kana'an at the opening ceremony of a seminar entitled "Human Cost of Conflict," Prince Hassan said real challenges lie in how nations can work together to enhance their ability to cope with the prevention and resolution of conflict and how to diminish the human cost of conflict and its aftermath.

He said the Middle East has witnessed more than its share in conflict and human suffering. "In fact, it has not enjoyed the fruits of real peace since the beginning of this century."

"The Arab-Israeli conflict has so far produced three major wars and a continuous state of regional conflict and suffering," the Regent added.

He identified qualitative human costs of conflict as the loss of human lives and human ability to lead a normal life due to physical injuries and various handicaps and deprivation, and loss of opportunities and human aspirations for a decent and dignified life. Prince Hassan said the utmost importance lies in finding ways and means of conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

The Regent commended the United Nations and its agencies for their work and support, but said despite all efforts and resources provided in the field of emerging relief operations in this region, "we still lack a comprehensive code of conduct in dealing with the human cost of conflict."

"We only hope that nations and peoples will realise more fully that the rising human cost of conflict will in the end frustrate all efforts to achieve durable peace and security," he said.

Kamel Abu Jaber, director of the Institute of Diplomacy and a participant in the two-day seminar, hosted by the Arab Thought Forum and supported by the UNDP, the UNHCR, the Institute of Diplomacy and the International Committee of the Red Cross, also criticised the fact that advanced technology which reduced distances and facilitated the flow of information among nations had caused civility to recede.

"The veneer of civilised behaviour appears to become thinner in proportion to the advancing 'villagisation' of the world," Abu Jaber said at the first session of the seminar.

He said most people seem to have developed an "unhealthy, callous attitude towards the misery and catastrophes befalling their fellow man."

Turning to the Middle East, he blamed Israel for the lack of progress in peace in the region, saying "the tragedy of the area is that once the Arab historical attitudes towards a settlement with Israel changed towards one of peace, the Israeli attitude, as evidenced by the right-wing election of the Likud in May 1996, seems to be moving in the opposite direction."

Abu Jaber, a professor of political science and former foreign minister, said the price of an Arab-Israeli peace was rather high, as not only successful development remains elusive during conflicts, but economies were either frail or failed and human and natural resources mis-placed.

"It must be remembered that an unresolved conflict leaves wounds beyond the life span of an individual, even a generation, and its impact becomes imprinted on the collective psyche and memory of peoples. Such a cost cannot be calculated. With the devastating effectiveness of weapons of mass destruction, there are no longer winners and losers: the loss is to all," said Abu Jaber, who headed the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the Madrid Middle East peace conference in October 1991.

The seminar's second session included Hisham Khatib, a consultant who presented a paper on the impact of unilateral sanctions on human development in the affected countries; Issam Chalabi, also a consultant, presenting a paper on the impact of U.N. and other sanctions on human development in affected countries, and Jorgen Lissner, regional representative of the United Nations Development Programme, whose paper dealt with the impact of unresolved conflicts on human development.

The remaining sessions will tackle assessments of U.N. and NGO experiences in coping with the human cost of resolved and unresolved conflicts and lessons learned from past experiences.

Speaking at the seminar will be representatives of U.N. agencies, the ICRC and NGOs.

Association threatens to suspend 1,300 non-paying members

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMMAN — The Jordan Pharmacists Association is again threatening to suspend the membership of 1,300 of its 5,000 members for failing to pay their membership fees, Secretary General Talal Albo said Sunday.

The General Assembly of the association Saturday decided to give dues dodgers — 26 per cent of association members — a grace period lasting until Oct. 31 before striking their names from the membership roster, said Albo.

He blamed the association's previous general assemblies for the large number of defaulters, saying that the assemblies were lax and indecisive, allowing members not to pay and still retain membership.

According to the association's by-laws, pharmacists who lose their membership are prohibited from practising in the Kingdom.

Albo said the association will be strict in enforcing its rules on dues payment, which include contributions to the Social Security Fund and the association pension fund.

According to association figures, members' payments to those two institutions and the association are JD850,000 in arrears.

The association earlier last month issued a similar warning, but most of the violators ignored the notice.

According to the by-laws, a member loses his/her membership if he/she does not pay the required fees for six consecutive months and after receiving a written warning.

Search under way in Dana Nature Reserve for missing archaeologist

By Rana Husseini

AMMAN — Rescue teams and police helicopters are searching for a 63-year-old Iraqi archaeologist who went missing after leaving a camp site in Dana Nature Reserve on Friday morning.

More than 70 rangers from the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and police have combed the area within a 10-kilometre radius from the site searching for Amal Khudeiri, an RSCN official said.

"We are exerting our utmost efforts in cooperation with police and have searched all the places that the woman might have gone, but found nothing," the official told the Jordan Times on Sunday.

According to the official, Khudeiri checked in at noon on Thursday and was supposed to spend one night at the camp and leave on Friday.

The woman, who was on her first visit to the reserve, was last seen at 5:00 a.m. on Friday, the official said.

Since then, he maintained, "we have been searching for her and have even used police dogs to track the woman using the clothes we found in her tent, but we could not find her."

The Dana project was initiated by the RSCN in 1993 in an effort to revive the endangered ecosystem of Dana's over-hunted and over-grazed land.

The reserve is home to 25 species of animals that are either threatened or considered "globally important," such as the ibex, wolves, hyenas and foxes.

It is also rich in archaeology with over 90 important sites.

The official ruled out the possibility that the woman might have been attacked by a wild animal.

Dana is located in the district of Tafileh, about 50 kilometres north of Petra. The reserve sweeps down in a series of mountain ridges from the 1500-metre high plateau near Qadesiyyah to the desert plains of Wadi Araba.

The reserve hosts more than 5,000 tourists and campers annually.

"This is the first time we have encountered such an incident. We are usually very careful in dealing with campers and we inform them of all the rules and regulations that they need to follow during their stay at the reserve," the RSCN official said.

(Al Ra'i Tafileh reporter Ghazi Ammarin contributed to this report.)

'Hospital renovation tenders awarded this week'

By Suha Ma'ayeh

AMMAN — The Health Ministry will award a tender this week for studies and designs of the first phase of the two-stage renovation of the state-run Al Bashir Hospital, a ministry official has said.

The hospital, located in the crowded neighbourhood of Al Ashrafiyeh in the eastern part of Amman, currently has 80 buildings scattered on an area of 200 dunums.

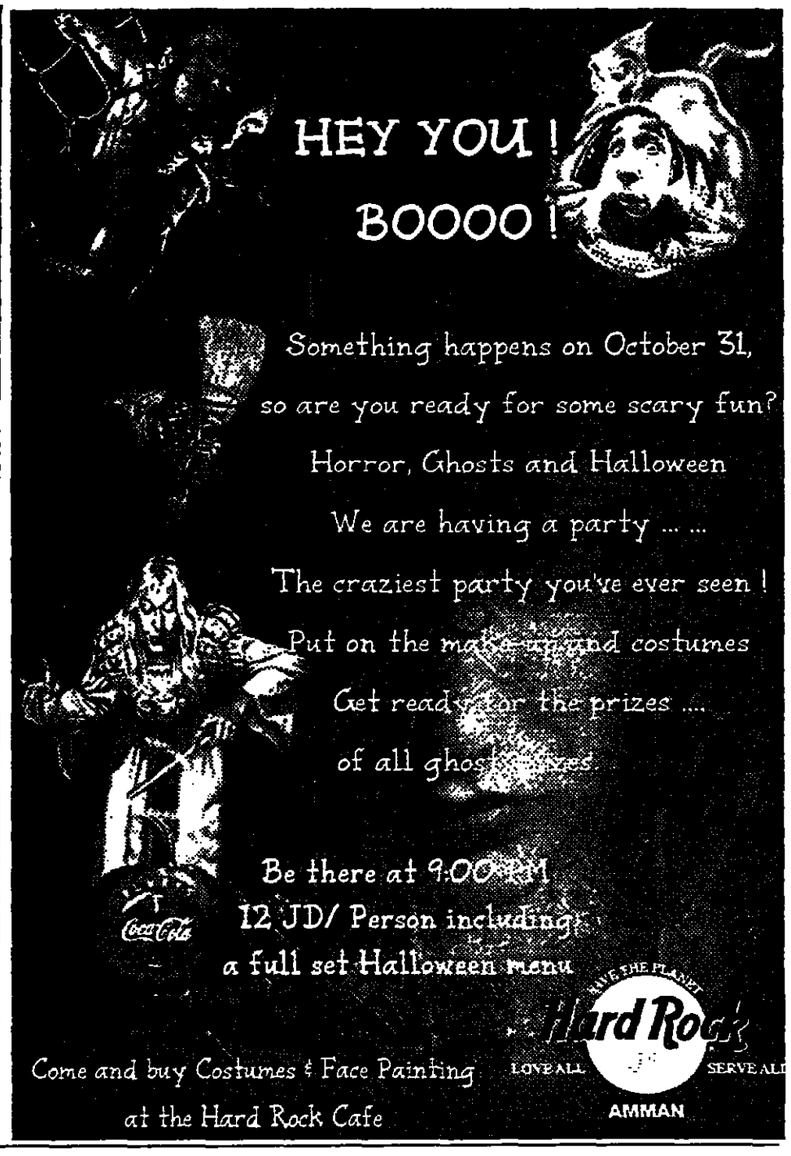
In an attempt to ease congestion at the overcrowded hospital, the government has allocated $12 million of a $50 million World Bank loan awarded earlier this year to renovate the hospital's old buildings, some dating to 1950.

The entire renovation project entails demolishing old buildings and constructing three major blocks connected by walkways above and below ground to facilitate movement among different departments, according to Qassem Na'san, director of the ministry's building directorate.

Na'san said the studies, which will cost the ministry JD155,000, are expected to be completed within six months and will cover designs of the first stage and part of the second stage.

The first stage entails building a main block that will include a 250-bed maternity and children's wing, an outpatient department and an X-ray department.

"After the studies are complete, the ministry will float another tender to start construction on the site," Na'san told the Jordan Times.



what's going on

FILM

* "Marche a L'Ombre" at the French Cultural Centre at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.
* "Jack and Sara" at the British Council, Jabal Amman on Tuesday Oct. 27 at 6:00 p.m.

MUSIC CONTEST

* Music contest at Books @ Cafe (sponsored by the National Music Conservatory) at 7:00 p.m.

LECTURES

* Policies of Monetary Reform in the Developing Countries — Jordan as an Example" by Dr. Youssef Mansour at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.
* "Newer Voices — The Caribbean" by Dr. Noha Hommad and Mrs. Anna Obeidat at the British Council, Jabal Amman at 5:00 p.m.
* "Schiller on Art and Society" (in English) by Professor Nicholas Linfield at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh on Tuesday Oct. 27 at 6:00 p.m.

CONCERT

* Musical performance by Freddy for Music at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m. (Daily until Oct. 29).

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel. 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:10 .....Cartoon — Batman
15:30 Drama — The Genie From Down Under
16:00 .....Drama — Neighbours
16:30 .....Doc. — Last Frontiers
17:00 ..French Programme — Thalassa
18:00 .....Drama — Wind at My Back
19:00 ..... Le Journal
19:15 French Programme — Science Actualites
19:30 ..... News headlines
19:35 ....Comedy — The Parenthood
20:00 .....Doc. — The Internet Cafe'
20:30 .....Big Sky
21:10 .....Encounter
22:00 ..... News in English
22:30 .....Veronica Clare
23:59 ..... End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:25 .....Fajr
05:43.....(Sunrise) Duha
11:20 .....Dhuhr
14:28 .....'Asr
16:56 .....Maghreb
18:14 .....'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swelfieh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624853/4624811.
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 5865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Swelfieh Tel. 5920146
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church 4771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Fine weather conditions will prevail, with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be moderate, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman.....14/26
Aqaba.....19/30
Deserts.....13/28
Jordan Valley.....18/32

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27 Aqaba 30 Humidity readings: Amman 44 per cent, Aqaba 55 per cent.

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun 22
Jerash 28
Um Qays 28
Madaba 27
Petra 29
Dead Sea 34

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Rashid 4875792
Dr. Ahmad Manna'.....5359413
Dr. Khalil Jbali.....4784450
Dr. Walid Al Masri.....5675485
Firas pharmacy 5661912
Al Asema pharmacy 5347632
Nairoukh pharmacy 4623672
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
Yacoub pharmacy 4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Najib pharmacy 5347632
IRBID:
Dr. Issam Al Salih .....(02) 246858
Al Quds pharmacy .....(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halaseh ....(09)982799
Khalifeh pharmacy .....(09)985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....4637111
Civil Defence Department ...5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 4630341
Civil Defence Emergency.....199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade.....4617101
Blood Bank.....4775121
Highway Police.....5343402
Traffic Police.....4896390
Public Security Dept.....4630321
Hotel Complaints.....5605800
Price Complaints.....5661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 4897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 0132
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs.....5661101
Jordan Televisi.....4773111
Radio Jordan 4774111
Water Authority 5680100
J. Electricity Authority ...5815615
Electric Power Co.... 4636381
RJ Flight Information....44-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport ...44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 5921199
The Islamic, Abdli 5666131/7
Hussein Medical Centre 5856856
Luzmila 4630195
Khalidi Maternity.....4644281/6
Akileh Maternity.....4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman. 4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 5607071
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131
Jordan Hospital 5607550
University Hospital 5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital ..5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali 5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen...4777101/3
Al-Bashir.....4775111/26
Army, Marka 4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital ...5602240/50
Amal Hospital 4891611/15

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital.....(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital .....(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital..... ...(09)986731
Al Hikma Modern Hospital .....(09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital .....(02)275555
Roman Catholic Hospital .....(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital .....(02)7101372, (02)7103101
Rosary Sisters Hospital .....(02)7102831, (02)7102011
Speciality Hospital ..(02)7103100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)2014111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 44 (52700). Information on Royal Wings fliglus can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:15 .....Sanaa (RJ)
08:30 .....Damascus (RJ)
08:35 .....Jeddah (RJ)
08:50 .....Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:30 .....New Delhi (RJ)
10:05 .....Beirut (RJ)
16:20 .....Cairo (RJ)
16:25 .....London (RJ)
16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:05 .....Kuwait (RJ)
18:30 .....Bangkok (RJ)
21:15 ....Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
00:15 .....Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)
03:00 ..Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

Other Flights
09:30 .....Cairo (MS)
13:10 .....Bahrain (GF)
14:05 .....Vienna (OS)
14:40 .....Doha (QR)
14:45 .....Khartoum (SD)
17:40 .....Beirut (ME)
18:05 ..... Frankfurt (LH)
18:45 .....Dubai (EK)
21:15 .....Istanbul (SD)
21:25 .....Tel Aviv (LY)
22:45 .....Athens, Beirut (OA)
00:30 Amsterdam, Damascus (EK)

Royal Wings (RW)
10:30 ..Aqaba (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
11:15 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
18:00 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
22:35 Tel Aviv (arriving at QAIA) (RW)
23:25 Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:30 .....Beirut (RJ)
10:30 .....Frankfurt, London (RJ)
11:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:05 .....Kuwait (RJ)
12:30 ..... Cairo (RJ)
21:20 .....Damascus (RJ
21:40 .....Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 .....Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
22:00 .....Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)
22:00 .....Tehran (RJ)
22:45 .....Sanaa (RJ)
22:45 ..... Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights
05:15 .....Istanbul (TK)
05:35 .....Larnaca (CY)
06:30 .....Paris (AF)
07:20 .....London (AF)
10:30 .....Cairo (MS)
14:00 .....Bahrain (GF)
14:50 .....Vienna (OS)
15:30 .....Doha (QR)
15:45 .....Istanbul (SD)
19:00 .....Beirut (ME)
19:45 .....Dubai (EK)
22:10 .....Tel Aviv (LY)
22:15 .....Khartoum (SD)
01:30 .....Amsterdam (KL)

Royal Wings (RW)
08:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
09:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
20:45 ..Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)
21:30 ...Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

Schroeder urges SPD to back coalition pact

BONN (R) — Gerhard Schroeder, promising "a new beginning", urged his Social Democrats Sunday to approve a coalition pact with the Greens that paves the way for him to become Germany's first centre-left chancellor in 16 years.

"The new government stands for innovation and justice," Schroeder told a special one-day conference of the SPD.

"We are going to give Germany a new beginning, first in Bonn, then in Berlin," he said, referring to next year's government move.

SPD officials expect the party's 500 delegates to back the agreement with the left-wing ecologists that will give Schroeder a 21-seat majority in the Bundestag lower house of parliament.

The new parliament is expected to vote Schroeder in to office as Germany's seventh postwar chancellor Tuesday.

Schroeder, 54, said the coalition pact bore the stamp of SPD policies.

He vowed to battle unemployment and promote "social justice". He stuck to the cherished tenets of social democracy, barely mentioning the "new centre", the middle ground of German politics which figured large in his victorious campaign against chancellor Helmut Kohl.

He assured Germany's allies that his government stood by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and backed further European Union integration and expansion.

Schroeder began his half-hour address by thanking SPD party president Oskar Lafontaine for his help in winning the Sept. 27 general election.

The German media have been filled with speculation of a power struggle between Schroeder and Lafontaine over the formation of a new government.

Schroeder's hand-picked economics ministers, computer millionaire Jost Stollmann, turned down the job a week ago after Lafontaine wrested key powers from him.

Lafontaine, the strongest figure in the party with a reputation as an old-fashioned tax-and-spend socialist, also played down speculation of rivalry with the centrist Schroeder.

"The Schroeder government can succeed only if the chancellor and party president work together and do not allow themselves to be divided by anybody," Lafontaine told the conference.

Lafontaine was instrumental in negotiating the coalition pact with the Greens which envisages a tax reform and economic measures to fight unemployment.

The Greens approved the agreement Saturday.

The parties hammered out the accord in three-weeks of negotiations following the election.

Lafontaine, who is set to take over a strengthened finance ministry, insisted that he and Schroeder were not fighting. He said the SPD could not have won without Schroeder.

An opinion poll in Bild am Sonntag newspaper showed that 61 per cent of voters agreed that the SPD would not have toppled Kohl without Schroeder.

But 41 per cent thought Lafontaine had the greatest influence in forging the coalition pact, compared with 31 per cent for Schroeder according to the Forsa Institute poll.

Chechen anti-kidnap chief killed in bomb attack

GROZNY (AFP) — The Chechen general tasked with fighting a wave of kidnappings in the breakaway Russian republic was fatally injured Sunday when a bomb exploded outside his office as he was arriving for work, the Interfax agency reported.

General Shaid Barguishev lost both his legs in the blast, which occurred as he was about to get out of his car and enter his office building, an AFP correspondent witnessed.

He and two bodyguards, also injured, were rushed to hospital, but the general later died of his injuries while undergoing surgery, Interfax said, quoting Chechen officials.

Investigators said they believed the bomb, placed near the entrance to the building in the centre of Grozny, was set off by remote control. The blast destroyed the car.

The attack came after authorities last week announced a massive operation to "eradicate" kidnappings plaguing the republic and free the more than 100 hostages held by kidnapping gangs there.

Sources close to the investigation said a group specialising in abductions could be behind the attack. They said Barguishev may also have been the victim of retaliation by families of those arrested by his forces.

President Aslam Maskhadov condemned the attack and vowed that the government would not be intimidated into changing policy toward hostage-takers.

"The attack aims to intimidate the services charged with maintaining order," the president said during an emergency meeting of security services.

Maskhadov said he would not abandon the battle against terrorism for "an instant", and called on Chechnya's Supreme Court judges, whom he met with Sunday, to prove their "steadfastness and hardness in the fight against terrorism."

He said the attackers would "be found and brought to justice", and promised "the government would put an end to the kidnappings and terrorists."

Supiane Akhmadov, Barguishev's deputy, told Interfax earlier that "in recent days, the fight against hostage-takers has intensified.

"More than 20 people have just been arrested, and three hostages have been freed," he added.

Those three, authorities announced Wednesday, included a Turkish businessman held captive for 13 months.

Chechnya has been swept by a wave of kidnappings and killings since the end of its bloody 1994-1996 war with Russia, which left it with de facto independence but without international recognition.

The devastated republic has been in a state of virtual anarchy, prey to violent factional struggles and frequent kidnappings for ransom.

Foreigners, including aid workers, journalists and businessmen, have been the frequent targets of rebel armed gangs opposed to Chechen President Aslan Maskhadov.

Maskhadov himself barely escaped an attempt on his life in a July attack that killed two of his bodyguards. No one was ever charged in that attack.

The president's opponents charge that he failed to win Chechnya international recognition after the war with Russia.

According to Chechen authorities, the 103 people currently being held hostage include three Britons, a New Zealander and a Frenchman.

New Prince Charles biography sparks outrage

LONDON (R) — A new biography of Prince Charles, which claims Princess Diana was the first to have an affair in their ill-fated marriage, sparked outrage Sunday.

Biographer Penny Junor claimed in "Charles: Victim or Villain?" that Diana had an affair with her bodyguard and also made death threats to Charles' lover, Camilla Parker Bowles.

Buckingham Palace, echoing the plea made last month by Princes William and Harry after the first anniversary of their mother's death in a Paris car crash, pleaded for her to be left to rest in peace.

Rosa Monckton, one of Diana's closest friends, said she was outraged at claims the princess had an affair with her bodyguard, Barry Manakee, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1987. "He was just a father figure," she said.

Extracts from Junor's book, which was said to have been written with the co-operation of 30 of Prince Charles' friends and advisers, were published in the Mail Sunday tabloid.

Buckingham Palace said the book was neither official nor authorised.

"This all seems to have been in the market place before. It is a rehash of old stories," a palace spokesman told The Sunday Telegraph.

"When Prince Harry went to Eton (school), he and his brother issued a plea in which they said they very much hoped that their mother and her memory would be finally allowed to rest in peace.

We can only repeat that statement." Junor's book was given blanket coverage by British tabloids Sunday with the biography allegedly claiming that Diana told Parker Bowles in late-night phone calls "I've hired someone to kill you." Junor said bodyguard Manakee's death led a grief-stricken Diana to slash at her body in an attempt at self-mutilation.

Diana was killed in a high-speed car crash with her millionaire companion Dodi Fayed, son of Mohammad Al Fayed, owner of the luxury Harrods department store.

Junor claimed in her book that Queen Elizabeth only allowed Diana's body to be brought back on a Royal aircraft after an aide said in desperation: "Would you rather, Ma'am, that she came back in a Harrods van?"

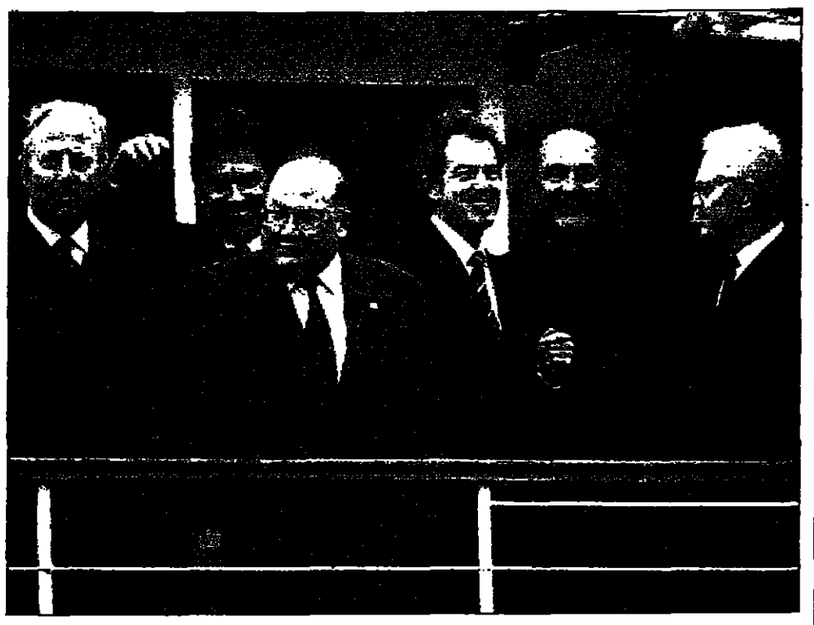
Buckingham Palace said the claim was "a grotesque misrepresentation of the truth."

"In the lead-up to their bitterly contested divorce, Charles and Diana fought long and hard in public over who was to blame for the break-up of their marriage.

In Andrew Morton's biography, Diana blamed Parker Bowles for the collapse of their marriage, saying there were always "three in the marriage" and labelling her love rival "The Rottweiler." Since Diana's death last August, there has been a long and discreet campaign to win acceptance for Parker Bowles as a consort for the heir to the throne.

A poll in the Sunday Mirror showed that Charles had gained more public support to marry his long-time lover.

The ICM poll for the tabloid showed 43 per cent saying they favoured Charles marrying her. In a similar poll a year ago, only 30 per cent said they should wed.



European Union Commission President Jacques Santer, Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President Jacques Chirac and French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin stand on board the steamer 'Thalia' after a boat trip on Lake Woerthersee from Poertschach to Klagenfurt in Austria's southern Carinthia province. European Union heads of state and governments met for two days of informal talks to review the bloc's future and consider ways of forging a more effective foreign policy (Reuters photo)

EU leaders discuss ways of improving image

POERTSCHACH, Austria (R) — European Union heads of government Sunday discussed ways of overcoming the indifference and hostility with which the bloc is often viewed by its 400 million citizens.

On the final day of a two-day informal summit in the Austrian lakeside resort of Poertschach, British Prime Minister Tony Blair told fellow heads of government they could not take the support of their people for granted.

"In some areas we have to integrate more," Blair's spokesman quoted him as saying, citing the international economic crisis, Kosovo, organised crime and the illicit drugs trade as issues which individual countries could not handle on their own.

But he said EU citizens would rebel if the EU tried to muscle in on areas which should remain the preserve of national governments, such as defence, income tax, health and education.

Austrian Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel told the leaders Saturday that "a generally critical public" had to be won over for each additional step in European integration.

"The introduction of the common currency and the enlargement process will add new challenges to this constant work of winning the citizens' hearts and minds,' Schuessel said.

"The Union must achieve tangible results in those matters which are most important to its citizens." This meant creating jobs, improving quality of life and increasing security.

German Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schroeder was absent from Sunday's session. He made his EU debut as a guest Saturday as he had not formally been elected head of government by the German Bundestag.

After a two-hour working session in their Poertschach hotel Sunday morning, the heads of government were due to travel by steamer along the Woerthersee lake to nearby Klagenfurt for press briefings and a final lunch together.

Saturday's session was dominated by a hastily scheduled visit by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, who briefed the EU on his latest peace accord with Israel.

On economic policy, the clear left-of-centre orientation of the EU's political leaders was apparent in calls by several prime ministers for general cuts in interest rates to ward off recession and prevent job losses.

Austrian government spokesman Josef Kalina said there was a strong consensus on the need for closer cooperation in economic policy.

"We need to accept tax harmonisation and minimum social standards and engage in dialogue with monetary policy-makers, without attacking the autonomy of the European Central Bank," he said.

Cambodian king welcomes proposal to try Khmer Rouge

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — U.N. special human rights envoy for Cambodia Thomas Hammarberg said Sunday he had held talks with King Norodom Sihanouk, which included plans to bring hard-core Khmer Rouge rebel leaders to trial.

Hammarberg, who arrived here last week to assess the human rights situation and prepare for the arrival of a U.N. team investigating the Khmer Rouge, said the king "warmly" supported the idea of a trial at a meeting Saturday.

"The king said he agreed with this idea and supported it warmly," Hammarberg told AFP in a telephone interview, adding he had also expressed concern over human rights in the post-election period.

He said the group of three experts, whose mission was first announced Friday, would arrive on Nov. 14 and spend 10 days in Cambodia. "They will assess what evidence actually exists (against the Khmer Rouge), and then they will propose to the international community ways to handle this," he added.

"From the international perspective there is an interest in a trial. Now it is very much on the Cambodian leaders. I am fairly optimistic," he said, but added strongman Hun Sen had yet to reply to a request for a meeting.

King Sihanouk allied himself briefly with the Khmer Rouge after his ouster as head of state in 1970 by Prime Minister Lon Nol, whose regime had U.S. backing. From exile in Beijing, then-Prince Sihanouk announced he had formed a united front with the Khmer Rouge to fight the Lon Nol government.

The king has recently said his conscience was clear regarding his association with the Maoist movement, and even offered to stand before any tribunal set up to try them.

The Khmer Rouge regime under the late Pol Pot, which ousted Lon Nol and ruled from 1975 to 1979, is blamed for the deaths of nearly two million people through starvation, disease, ill treatment and executions. During much of that period, the prince was held under house arrest by the Khmer Rouge in Phnom Penh.

The rebel group all but disintegrated this year, following a series of mass defections and a determined government offensive on their last bastions in the north of Cambodia.

Khmer Rouge military leader Ta Mok, nominal political chief Khieu Samphan and ideological tsar Nuon Chea are still at large.

Hammarberg said that during the meeting King Sihanouk had also expressed concern over violence in the wake of the country's July 26 elections. "We discussed the human rights situation. He, as before, was very supportive and urged that we go on with our work," Hammarberg said.

"He gave his view of the political situation here and said there was a link between the need to form a government and the prospects of improving the human rights situation in Cambodia."

Cambodia has been without a recognised government since July elections, which Hun Sen won but not with a large enough majority to rule alone. Talks to form a coalition between Hun Sen's ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) and the opposition FUNCINPEC party of ousted co-Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh are stalemated, with little hope of a breakthrough in the short term.

Dozens of bodies have been found in shallow graves or floating in rivers since anti-CPP demonstrations by opposition supporters claiming election fraud in August and September.

Hun Sen's administration has blamed the violence in the protests, during which at least two people died, on anarchic elements in the opposition. Opposition leaders Prince Ranariddh and former finance minister Sam Rainsy, who heads a self-named party, have left the country, saying it is not safe for them to return.

NEWS IN BRIEF

EU leaders back Kohl as honorary European

POERTSCHACH, Austria (AFP) — EU leaders meeting at an informal summit in southern Austria backed a proposal to declare outgoing German Chancellor Helmut Kohl "an honorary citizen of Europe," aides said Sunday. The veteran German leader would become only the second figure to receive the European Union's top distinction — previously bestowed on Jean Monnet considered the father of modern Europe. The award would be in appreciation of Kohl's role in Europe's evolution during his 16 years as chancellor. Kohl, who was defeated in Sept. 27 elections, decided not to attend the EU meeting in the lakeside town of Poertschach, which comes two days before Social Democrat (SPD) leader Gerhard Schroeder is sworn in as his successor. Schroeder attended the first day of the two-day summit Saturday, as a "guest" of host Austrian Chancellor Viktor Klima. A formal decision on the proposal could be taken at the Dec. 11-12 Vienna summit which will climax Austria's six-month EU presidency. Frenchman Monnet was awarded the distinction as founder in 1951 of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the precursor of the European Union.

Six killed when gas well explodes in Louisiana

BRYCELAND, Louisiana (AP) — A natural gas well exploded and caught fire Saturday afternoon, killing six of the 13 workers on the crew. At least two of five injured workers remained hospitalised, including one in critical condition. Two of the workers were uninjured, said Bob Lane, chief operating officer for Sonat Exploration Co., which owns the well. The intense heat from the fire prevented rescue crews from getting close enough to remove some of the bodies of those who were killed. The derrick started to melt in the intense heat, leaning towards a small patch of woods, and eventually it fell, said state police Lt. Mike Edmonson. However, there was no threat of the fire spreading, he said. The crew was completing a new well in Bienville Parish, about 72 kilometres east of Shreveport, when it blew about 2 p.m., Lane said. Edmonson said the fire was expected to burn through the night. The cause of the blaze was not immediately known. Lane said the company's top priority "is to take care of the people. No. 2 is to get the well under control. Then and only then will we investigate to find out what happened." Six workers apparently died at the scene. Two people were hospitalised at LSU Medical Centre, including one man who was in critical condition. State police had earlier reported that a seventh worker had died at LSU, but that report was wrong, said state police spokesman Chris Johnson. "He's not doing very well, but he is not dead," he said.

11 dead as storms lash Britain

LONDON (AFP) — At least 11 people were killed as torrential rain and winds of up to 130 kilometres per hour lashed Britain, police said Sunday. The downpour, the worst to hit Wales and southwestern England in 20 years, also caused about £400 million ($670 million) worth of damage, insurers said. The storms caused rivers to overflow and interrupted road, train and sea traffic in southern Britain. Three canoeists drowned in separate accidents, swept away by swollen rivers as they paddled along or walked on shore. In one incident, a 19-year-old canoeist was thought to have drowned on the River Dart after police called off a search until the swollen river subsided. In another, the body of a 47-year-old man was pulled from the nearby river Barle, which had been placed on a red flood alert. Friday, police found the body of a 25-year-old canoeist swept away when he fell into the River Rhondda in south Wales. At Clifford, in western England, rescuers resumed a search for a 62-year-old farmer who disappeared near the River Wye after going out to move cattle to higher ground. Eight people died in rain-related road accidents in western parts of the country, rescuers said. Four people died in a head-on collision on a slippery road in Bastonford, and three others died in Buglawton. A gust of wind thrust a motorcyclist into a crane, killing him. Southampton airport had to be closed late Saturday after a Dutch KLM aircraft with 95 people onboard skidded on the runway and finished landing on the grass. Train services were disrupted and cross-Channel ferry services cancelled or delayed Saturday. Crossings between Britain and Ireland were almost entirely cancelled.

Nine killed in eastern Congo rebel stronghold

KIGALI (AFP) — Nine people including a rebel soldier were shot dead at the weekend in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) rebel stronghold of Goma, various sources including rebel radio reported Sunday. Five others were killed in the attack Saturday, the reports said. A Rwandan authority contacted in the town of Gisenyi just across the border in northwest Rwanda said that "at around seven o'clock in the morning several rounds of gunfire were heard in Goma. Three hours later we learned that people were killed in this town, and only today, Sunday, we learned that nine people all together were killed." Radio Goma, a rebel station, quoted a local authority, Bosco Kabutsitsi, as saying the attack took place about five kilometres west of the Goma airport. "Security services at Goma intervened rapidly and are pursuing these wretched criminals," the official said. An independent source contacted by AFP said the victims were merchants.

Cargo ship blasts off for Mir; carries supplies and giant space mirror

MOSCOW (AP) — A supply ship blasted off Sunday on a mission to bring tonnes of cargo to the Mir space station. Among the items: a giant space mirror designed to illuminate sun-starved northern cities. The Progress cargo ship was launched from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakstan at 7:14 a.m. Moscow time. The launch had been delayed for 10 days until the cash-strapped Russian government could afford it. The Progress is scheduled to dock with the Mir Tuesday morning, bringing fuel, food, water, New Year's gifts and the experimental space mirror. It also will bring several kits of scientific equipment, including a Russian-French device to be installed on Mir's exterior by cosmonauts Gennady Padalka and Sergei Avdeyev in a Nov. 11 spacewalk. The device is designed to collect data about meteorites when Mir flies through a meteorite cloud in mid-November. The space mirror, called the Znamya, or Banner, is expected to be unfurled in February, when Progress is jettisoned from Mir. The mirror, about 100 feet in diametre, is a membrane covered with a metal layer that, in theory, should reflect sunlight onto some of the chilly reaches of Russia during the long nights. However, officials say the Znamya would only be visible in good weather and to those who knew its precise position. They said it would resemble a shooting star, not a large object such as the moon. It is expected to serve as an experimental prototype for larger mirrors that might be sent up in the future. The Progress launch, originally scheduled for Oct. 15, was postponed because of funding problems that prevented the space agency from buying the booster rocket, Soyuz-U, from its manufacturer.

Chilean women hold onto a giant photograph of former leader Gen. Agusto Pinochet *during a pro-Pinochet rally in the upper part of* town in Santiago. Some 15,000 Chileans gathered to demand the freedom of the former dictator and according to police this was the largest demonstration in Chile this decade (Reuters photo)

Chilean protesters demand Pinochet's release

SANTIAGO (R) — About 20,000 people, many wearing yellow ribbons and waving flags, demanded Saturday that Britain free Chile's former dictator Augusto Pinochet, seen by the country's right wing as a beloved father figure.

Led by politicians and musicians, the gathering stretched for a half mile from a stage in Santiago's upscale Las Condes district.

Las Condes mayor Joaquin Lavin, a presidential candidate for the right-wing Independent Democracy Union, called the rally the biggest in Chile this decade.

The national police estimated the crowd at 18,000 to 20,000. They said 25 protesters were detained near the British and Spanish ambassadors' residences.

Britain arrested Pinochet, 82, in a London hospital last Friday, acting on a request from a Spanish judge seeking to have him extradited and prosecuted on charges of genocide, torture and terrorism during his 17-year reign that ended in 1990.

Chile has demanded his release, charging that Pinochet was *unlawfully* taken into custody while in England for medical reasons. They contend that the former army commander-in-chief, now a senator for life, has diplomatic immunity and that his arrest *amounted to a kidnapping.*

Many in the crowd held signs in support of the former dictator reading, "Free Pinochet" and "Give us back Pinochet."

Lavin, who spearheaded the protest, said the nation is on "the most Chilean of all missions: rescuing an ex-president kidnapped by a foreign nation."

"We are tired of being humiliated," he said. "We cannot continue to accept this situation. Chile does not want to be a second-class country."

He then turned to Chile's presidential elections, which will be held in December 1999. He slammed Socialist candidate Ricardo Lagos by comparing him to Socialist President Salvador Allende, who died in the coup that Pinochet led in 1973.

"We already had one Socialist president. We do not want another," said Lavin, adding that Britain should release Pinochet out of "an act of humanity."

Foreign Minister Jose Miguel Insulza Saturday recognised the possibility of using Pinochet's health — he is recovering from back surgery — to get his release.

"We have to know in what circumstance and in what moment that alternative, which the government has never ruled out, can be proposed," Insulza told reporters.

Britain has said that humanitarian factors will be considered when it makes a decision on whether to extradite Pinochet to Spain.

Earlier Saturday, about 150 Pinochet critics gathered in Santiago's central square, urged extradition, and scoffed at humanitarian pleas on behalf of the former dictator.

"What an embarrassment. Humanitarian reasons? They make Mr. Pinochet look like a victim," Gladys Marin, the head of Chile's Communist Party, told the anti-Pinochet rally.

Doctor who performed abortions killed in upstate New York

AMHERST, New York (AP) — A sniper killed a doctor who performs abortions, firing through the physician's kitchen window — the first fatality among five sniper attacks on upstate New York or Canadian abortion providers in the last four years.

Dr. Barnett Slepian, 51, a target of anti-abortion protesters since the 1980s, was gunned down Friday night. The killing came days after authorities warned abortion providers in the region about possible violence because the four earlier attacks happened within a few weeks of Nov. 11, Veterans Day.

"There's some type of connection on the date. We don't know what it is," Inspector David Bowen of the Hamilton-Wentworth (Ont.) police said Saturday.

Bowen is part of a Canadian-American task force that has investigated the shootings since November 1997. Task force spokesman Keith McCaskill said the shooter or shooters had not contacted authorities following any of the attacks.

Slepian's wife told police the shooting happened minutes after the couple returned home from synagogue. The Slepians' four sons, ages 7 to 15, also were *home at the time.*

Before Slepian, three Canadian doctors and a doctor near Rochester, New York, were shot and wounded since 1994. In each case, the doctors were fired upon with a high-powered rifle through windows in their homes. Canadian and American authorities issued safety tips to doctors Tuesday.

"They were told to stay away from windows that weren't covered with curtains or blinds and to be aware of their surroundings and anything suspicious at their clinics," said Frank Olesko, Amherst's assistant police chief.

Slepian's killer shot through a window with raised blinds from behind a back yard fence. A helicopter search was fruitless. The gunman remained at large Saturday.

On a list of doctors who perform abortions, clinic workers and others compiled posted on a Web site, Slepian's name had a line through it. The list names abortion providers it says are working, wounded or have been killed.

The Web site, which has rantings against homosexuality and the government, includes photos of aborted foetuses and has links to the Army of God. Letters signed by the shadowy Army of God claimed responsibility for the 1997 bombings of a gay bar in Atlanta and an abortion clinic, and the this year's fatal Birmingham abortion clinic bombing.

President Clinton said Saturday that he is "outraged" by Slepian's slaying and that the Justice Department is working with local authorities to track down his killer.

Little-known Picasso works to be auctioned in Paris

PARIS (R) — A host of little-known Picasso canvases, drawings and trinkets hidden away in a Paris flat for half a century by one of his lovers go under the hammer Tuesday to the delight of the art world.

Most of the "Picassos of Dora Maar", which will be sold in an auction spread over six days, have never been exhibited, and some are major works.

Theodora Markovic, known as Dora Maar, was the Spanish artist's lover for seven years in a crucial period of his life encompassing the Spanish Civil war and most of World War II.

A dark-haired beauty, she was the model for the anguished woman crying in horror in Picasso's most famous work, "Guernica".

She died last year, a 90-year-old recluse in her Left Bank flat crammed with his paintings and drawings near the Les Deux Magots café in Saint-Germain-des-Près where they met in 1936.

"The silence Dora Maar had imposed on herself is at last being lifted," art critic Pierre Cabanne said.

The works include sketches, pebbles on which Picasso carved Maar's portrait with his pocket knife, jewels, bottlecaps shaped into birds, and rough faces made out of scraps of chequered paper tablecloths with cigarette burns for the eyes.

They are being auctioned to pay for inheritance taxes. Born of a Yugoslav father and a French mother, Maar lived in seclusion after Picasso abandoned her, and she died childless.

Only two remote female relatives have been located, in France and Croatia, who stand to receive an unexpected windfall.

The heirs, who were not identified, are said never to have met Maar.

The collection has been valued at over 150 million francs ($27 million), but experts say it is likely to fetch much more.

"I expect genuine surprises as some people are most interested in an auction that will never be repeated. Ending the century with such a sale is fantastic," said art expert Marc Blondeau.

A canvas of Dora Maar as "La Femme Qui Pleure" (The Crying Woman) is valued at 16-20 million francs ($2.9-3.6 million).

A well known photographer, Maar was Picasso's lover while he worked feverishly on "Guernica" — commissioned by the doomed Spanish Republican government following the bombing of the historical Basque capital in 1937 by the Nazi allies of Nationalist general Francisco Franco.

Her photographs of Picasso's preliminary sketches for "Guernica" will also be on auction.

Among the main works are "Dora Maar with Green Fingernails", valued at 20-30 million francs ($3.6-5.4 million), "Dora Maar On The Beach", and "Dora Maar with Green Kerchief", together with sketches of "Thoughtful Dora Maar" and "Dora Maar Asleep".

Picasso also illustrated manuscript poems by Paul Eluard, the writer who introduced the two lovers, which are estimated to fetch 800,000 francs ($145,000).

Auctioneer Jacques Solanet said the auction would show if investors were turning to the art market after the stock exchange slump.

Maar, a muse of surrealist poets, playfully pricked her fingers with a knife in order to draw Picasso's attention at Les Deux Magots, and gave him her blood-stained gloves.

Their affair turned sour amid increasingly angry arguments and they split up in 1943. Maar plunged into depression and spent the rest of her life in seclusion. Picasso died in 1973 aged 91.

NATO generals resume Kosovo talks in Belgrade

BELGRADE (R) — NATO's top generals resumed urgent talks on the Kosovo crisis with Yugoslav leaders Sunday after a few hours' rest following almost 12 hours of meetings stretching through the night.

The NATO commanders were pressing Belgrade to accelerate military withdrawals from Kosovo to allow refugees displaced in fighting with ethnic Albanian separatists to come home safely and open the way for a political settlement.

NATO has given Yugoslav federal President Slobodan Milosevic until Tuesday to comply with U.N. demands for military disengagement in Kosovo or face punitive air strikes.

NATO supreme commander General Wesley Clark and General Klaus Naumann, chairman of his military committee, talked with Milosevic and Yugoslav army chief of staff General Momcilo Perisic for almost 12 hours until around 5 a.m. (0400 GMT).

"They emphasised to Milosevic and Perisic that these were not negotiations, but rather discussions on compliance with U.N. Security Council directives," the diplomat, who asked not to be identified, told Reuters.

"The NATO delegation came to tell them that compliance was insufficient and to make very clear that the activation order for NATO air strikes is still in place."

The NATO generals were believed to have had two separate sessions with Milosevic and longer, more technical talks with Perisic and Serbian military police commanders before retiring to a hotel for some rest.

"They have now just gone into further meetings. They had packed up, apparently ready to return to Brussels, but they are now having further meetings instead," the diplomat said.

The talks were held under tight security and secrecy without media access and there was no word from either side on how the discussions had gone.

NATO sources had said earlier that Clark and Naumann would resist any Yugoslav attempt to dilute NATO's ultimatum by bargaining.

Nor would they accept alleged activity by Kosovo Liberation Army guerrillas as an excuse for stalling on a substantial withdrawal of Yugoslav federal troops and Serbian military police from the Albanian-majority province.

Belgrade has drawn international condemnation for pounding Kosovo's rebels and civilians alike in a summer offensive, destroying and pillaging scores of towns and putting more than 250,000 inhabitants to flight. The estimated death toll is 800.

There is a dire need to get thousands of Kosovo Albanian refugees out of the mountains and forests and into habitable shelter before the bitter Balkan winter descends. The nights are already freezing and heavy snowfall looms within weeks.

But diplomatic observers said Saturday they had found Yugoslav security forces and KLA guerrillas reinforcing emplacements in volatile pockets of central Kosovo.

In New York, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution authorising NATO aircraft and European monitors to ensure that fighting stops in Kosovo but avoided the issue of using force if needed to impose their mandate.

Russia and China abstained from the 13-0 vote, which endorsed accords signed by Yugoslavia that allow NATO to evacuate European monitors — but only with noncombat aircraft.

Still, the United States and Britain immediately made it clear NATO would use force if necessary.

Three die in violent Peru protest at peace deal

IQUITOS, Peru (R) — Three people including a baby girl were killed as thousands of demonstrators rampaged through a Peruvian jungle town Saturday during violent protests against a historic peace deal with Ecuador, authorities said.

Eight more people were seriously injured as army and police, firing shots and tear gas canisters into the air, clashed with protesters who raided and set alight government buildings and burned officials' cars, witnesses said.

Thousands of marchers flooded the streets in the Amazon town of Iquitos a day after Peru and Ecuador announced they had reached a peace accord to end a bloody, decades-old border dispute that last sparked a war in 1995.

While many townspeople marched to support the peace accord, most demonstrators opposed the deal that gave Ecuador navigation and trade rights in the Amazon, witnesses said.

Most Peruvians welcomed the accord, which effectively eliminated a border flashpoint that has caused wars and skirmishes for over 50 years, polls showed Saturday.

But Iquitos, which has a population of about 150,000 and is Peru's only major town in the northwestern jungle region bordering Ecuador, has traditionally opposed any concessions to the neighbouring Andean nation.

In Saturday's disturbances, a girl and a 51-year-old woman died when they were hit by a speeding government car after regional officials and two cabinet ministers escaped from their ransacked hotel, witnesses and radio reports said.

A man also died from a bullet wound in the head in a separate incident during the disturbances, local hospital officials said.

By nightfall, as palls of smoke from buildings and burned- out cars cloaked much of the sweaty town, soldiers had taken control of the four regional government buildings that were set on fire and only a few hundred protesters were still on the streets, witnesses.

Peru and Ecuador will sign the border accord Monday in Brasilia resolving the dispute, one of the Western Hemisphere's longest outstanding border conflict.

But in a deal brokered by the United States, Brazil, Argentina and Chile, Lima allowed some technical concessions and Ecuador effectively gave up its historical claim to a large swathe of Peru's Amazon.

Malaysian opposition, rights activists urge Mahathir to resign

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Opposition and human rights groups Sunday urged Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad to step down or hold early polls after an outbreak of political violence.

But they said they expected the veteran leader would fight to stay in power. General elections are due in 2000.

"Mahathir must resign, or if he does not want to, he must hold elections immediately," said Syed Husin Ali, president of the Malaysian People's Party, a member of the opposition coalition Malaysian People's Justice Movement (Gerak).

"The problem now is that there is no justice in the system and the person responsible for that is Dr. Mahathir," Ali told a news conference.

"He should step down with grace, but he won't. He will die with his boots on to protect his children and cronies."

Mahathir, who has rejected previous calls to resign, condemned those involved in Saturday's street violence in which protesters threw rocks and petrol bombs at police.

"The groups calling themselves reformists seeking to uphold justice are the ones who are breaking the law," he was quoted as saying by the national news agency Bernama in the northern resort island of Langkawi.

No one benefited from the incident but instead the country's image suffered, he said. Mahathir, who is also home minister, called the rioters cowards and said they used women and children as shields during the protests.

Unrest first broke out in September when Mahathir, in power since 1981, sacked and arrested Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim.

Mahfuz Omar, deputy youth chief of the Muslim opposition Parti Islam Semalaysia (PAS), said: "One way to reduce the tension is to hold elections and let the people decide the future direction of the political system."

A leading human rights group issued the first call for Mahathir's resignation early Sunday following the fierce overnight street clashes between police and demonstrators demanding reform.

"The prime minister, who is also home minister, must accept full responsibility for having totally mishandled the situation," said the Suara Rakyat Malaysia (Suaram).

"He cannot ignore the legitimate discontent of the people. We call upon the prime minister to immediately resign so that a general election may be held."

National news agency Bernama citing the police said 241 people were arrested during Saturday's violence. Hospital staff said about a dozen demonstrators were injured, while police said at least one officer was hurt.

Violence erupted Saturday when police armed with water cannon and tear gas broke up an illegal pro-Anwar assembly at a downtown shopping area.

The move was followed by hours of street skirmishes in a mainly Muslim neighbourhood between protesters and police.

Top opposition MP Lim Kit Siang of the Democratic Action Party urged calm on both sides and called for an "independent and public inquiry" into the violence in Malay-dominated Kampong Baru.

Every Malaysian "must be conscious of the need to maintain a high degree of discipline to maintain law and order, which can be quite fragile in a multi-racial society," he said.

Anwar, once seen as Mahathir's political heir, has been charged with 10 counts of corruption and sexual misconduct, which he denies. His trial on four of the corruption charges begins Nov. 2.

Human rights group Suaram said the "violent and repressive actions of the Malaysian police in dealing with recent public protests are completely unacceptable and unjustifiable."

It denounced the police move to close down an indoor forum Saturday calling for the repeal of the Internal Security Act (ISA), which allows for detention without trial and was originally designed to fight Communist insurgents during British colonial rule.

Mahathir used the law to arrest Anwar before the filing of formal charges.

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Tuesday 27 8 p.m. The Wonderful Years That Sucked (1997) السنوات الرائعة المروعة (١٩٩٧)
Wednesday 28 8 p.m. Kolya (1996) كوليا (١٩٩٦)
Thursday 29 8 p.m. Buttoners (1997) أصحاب الأزرار (١٩٩٧)
Friday 30 8 p.m. Obecna Skola (1998) المدرسة الابتدائية (١٩٩٨)
Royal Cultural Center - Main Hall
Daily at 8:00 p.m.
except Friday (5:00 p.m.)
Admission Free
المركز الثقافي الملكي
يوميا في الساعة ٨ مساء
ما عدا يوم الجمعة في الساعة ٥ مساء
الدخول مجانا

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Assessing an anniversary

THE FOURTH anniversary of the 1994 peace treaty between Jordan and Israel today offers a chance to appraise the value of the accord and measure the impact it has had on the peoples of the two states. It also is a time to reflect on the definition of "peace" and assess what Jordanians and Israelis had hoped and still hope to gain from the treaty — a cold peace that entails simply the absence of conflict, or a peace that would help promote the interests of citizens of both countries.

After four years, many Jordanians still feel that the regional peace process in general and Jordan's treaty with Israel in specific have not yielded many of the benefits promised by these undertakings, such as withdrawals from occupied Arab lands and the economic "peace dividends." Most importantly, the Israeli desire to reach a settlement with the Palestinians has so far seemed to be illusory. Despite the Wye Plantation deal, a fair and just settlement between the Palestinians and Israelis seems as far away, or farther, than it did in 1991 at the beginning of the Madrid process.

On the home front, Israel has some explaining to do for both ongoing and isolated actions vis-à-vis the Kingdom and Jordanians, actions that are puzzling for a country to perpetrate against another with which it is supposedly at peace. No one is able to forget the attempted assassination of Jordanian citizen Khaled Misha'al in Amman last year. Israel continues to effectively blockade the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, one of Jordan's most logical markets and trade partners, from the Kingdom's exports. Even travel for many Jordanians to Israel and the Palestinian territories remains an ordeal.

The popular Jordanian turn away from "normalisation" with the Jewish state since Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's election in 1996 should come as no surprise to anyone. Normalisation entails mutual respect and trust, two things Netanyahu explicitly ruled out between Israelis and Arabs during his election campaign and his first two years in office. It is not logical to demand that a party which has received very little from a relationship hold the party that has taken all the benefits in high esteem.

It is four years into the historic 1994 Jordanian-Israeli treaty, but many Jordanians find it hard to tell the difference between the pre- and post-accord Israel. The choice still remains: a cold peace or a functional and active partnership with the Kingdom. Israel must make the decision of whether to remain in its fortress or begin a new chapter in relations with its neighbours. This cannot happen without a fair and just settlement of the Palestinian question as well as a resolution on the Lebanese and Syrian peace tracks. Unfortunately, after four years, it seems that Israel has already made its decision.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Tareq Massarwah slammed the Wye Plantation agreement reached by the Palestinians and the Israelis as a clear violation of human rights. He said the deal requires the Palestinian side to apprehend individuals "suspected" of perpetrating acts of violence "for an unlimited period of time." Massarwah criticised American President Bill Clinton for accepting such an accord which is an infringement of the human rights the United States itself so vociferously calls for. He said the U.S. claims it fights human rights abuses in Iraq and Yugoslavia, yet it contributed to the signing of this atrocious deal. The Israelis on their side will never allow the creation of the Palestinian state, Massarwah said, after all most Israelis elected the hard-line government of Netanyahu who always opposed peace with the Palestinians.

Al Dustour's Mazen Saket commented on the long overdue interim deal signed between the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and the Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu under American sponsorship in Washington. The deal stipulates that the Palestinian National Authority dismantle armed activists groups and crack down on anti-Israeli violence, said Saket. Saket charged that the deal is very dangerous because it may cause a deadly Palestinian civil war. The writer called on the Palestinian opposition to avoid greater split by practising constraint. He said only patience, sacrifice and courage from all Palestinian opposition parties can stop Palestinian factions from turning against each other. Saket said if such a war happens, the Palestinian cause will eventually be undermined by its own people.

Economic Review

Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Don't blame the reforms

IN VIEW of the fall in the growth rates in the GDP over the last two years, the near conclusion of the second economic reform and stabilisation programme, and the start of the third of these programmes next year (which is fast drawing to a close) many may wonder, and rightfully so, about the success of such programmes and the reform process (started officially in 1989, and actively in 1992) which emanate therefrom. But opponents and proponents alike need to keep several facts in mind when considering the new era and the available options, and must remember that socio-economic policy is never made in a vacuum.

At the outset, no one could deny that 1989 was a bad year, and the economy was worse off than it is now. In 1989, the growth rate was 13.5%, the deficit in the current account of the balance of payments was 19% of the GDP, foreign debt was 190% of GDP, the debt service ratio was 45%, the inflation rate was 25.6%, and the official unemployment rate was 25%. However, by 1997, and clearly because of economic reform and stabilisation efforts, the economy had significantly improved. For example, the debt to GDP ratio as a result of a prudent debt-reduction policy and an expanding GDP had dropped by 52%. And in spite of the decline in the growth rates of 1996 and 1997 (0.8% and 1.7%, respectively), the economy remains better off than it was when the reform effort started.

Further, before evaluating the economic effect of these programmes on the economy, one should also ask if their implementation process has been completed. To those involved directly in these programmes the answer is clear: These reform programmes have not been fully implemented. Several of the legislative changes are yet to be realised; and a significant component of the reform process remains subject to the inquisition and onslaught of the doubters — public heroes whose intrepidity is costing Jordan dearly. In fact, the delay in the process may have helped make the reform policy contractionary instead of expansionary since the revenues from privatisation were not realised and the would-be enlargement of the investment base resulting from liberalisation has for all intents and purposes disappeared.

Also, all the procedures and steps to be taken under these programmes are aimed at improving the supply side of the economy, that is, the production component of the production process. However, the various aspects of these reforms, such as new business related laws, streamlined government procedures and lower tariffs all affect wages and the return on capital indirectly. Therefore, the positive consequences of the reforms will only be felt in the medium or long runs. In other words, even if the reforms had been completed (which is not the case) they would not have been able to positively impact the economy yet.

What caused the relapse of the economy? First, let us agree that to make the reform programmes the source of present ailments (i.e., to cast the blame on someone) is not only lazy but also emphatically and dangerously wrong. The reforms aim at reducing bureaucracy, removing market distortions and creating a more attractive business environment. Internally, the unhurried implementation of streamlining measures of government processes has been among the factors that prevented the speeding of the fruits of these reforms. Another impediment is the stagnation of the privatisation of the Jordan Telecommunications Corporation (JTC), which is one cause for the present recession as it simply forestalled the injection of hundreds of millions of dollars when they were needed the most. Additionally, the slow progress in the modernisation of customs procedures ranks among those factors that increase the cost of doing business in Jordan. While Jordan has less bureaucratic obstacles than other countries in the region, the relatively small size of the market makes these obstacles overly burdensome to business, regardless of whether ongoing or in the start-up stage.

On the international front, the election of Netanyahu in the 1996 and his election campaign promise, then, to repeal the Oslo accords was, and remains still, a reason for the dampening of the economic activity in Jordan at large. The Iraqi crisis and the Jordanian quota, which was reduced by almost 50%, have caused this traditionally Jordanian market to shrink considerably without a clear replacement in sight. Also, the drop in the Asian currencies and their resultant devaluation against the dollar, to which the Jordanian dinar is pegged, has been a mixed curse: our exports of potash and phosphate decreased, thus decreasing potential revenues and GDP growth while imports from East Asia became significantly cheaper, which led to an increase in imports, particularly consumer goods, thus further expanding the balance of payments deficit. Falling oil prices added another dimension to Jordan's oil dependent economy as remittances from Jordanians declined with the promise to decline further if the slump in oil prices continues.

The new reform programme, which most likely will be a continuation of the old ones, will have a positive impact on the economy because it will mean, in addition to continuing the reform, finishing the last programme and fulfilling all that had been promised. However, the government must forge ahead with the privatisation of the JTC as planned or chances will be lost as world demand for telecommunications stocks is already less than the supply for this once highly prized commodity. It seems that all the reform acts must be acted upon or they will backfire and cause additional contractions in the economy. Additionally, Jordan and peace recently received a significant boost from His Majesty the King, whose valiant efforts in spite of illness, have brought forth concord where there was discord and despair. The economy, which had suffered the consequences of a no-peace, no-war regional climate, should respond positively to a revived peace. Jordanians, could do very well, not only for themselves but also for the country and the economy by living up to the image of His Majesty, who is beyond doubt the world's most respected and revered leader.

The mole they want us to forget

By Michael Jansen

THE LEWINSKY scandal may have another, so far unpublicised, dimension which could continue to influence U.S. Middle East policy for the duration of the Clinton administration and, perhaps, beyond. Israel, armed with tapes of phone sex between the president and Lewinsky, reportedly blackmailed President Bill Clinton into ordering the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to halt 24-hour surveillance of high-ranking administration officials in the search for an Israeli mole, code named "MEGA" (Middle East International 550). Thus, MEGA could still be in place and even remain in play after Clinton leaves the White House in January 2001.

The MEGA story which broke in The Washington Post on May 7, 1997 revealed that the FBI was investigating these officials following satellite monitoring of a conversation between an Israeli intelligence officer in the U.S. embassy and his chief, Danny Yatom, at Mossad headquarters in Tel Aviv. This conversation took place on or about January 15, the day on which the Hebron accord was concluded between the Palestine Authority and Israel. Israeli Ambassador Eliahu Ben Elissar, wanted the agent to secure from MEGA a copy of the secret letter from Secretary of State Warren Christopher to President Yasser Arafat spelling out U.S. commitments to the Palestinians. Yatom responded, "this is not something we use MEGA for," both dismissing Ben Elissar's request and revealing the existence of the top level mole to satellite-droppers of the U.S. National Security Agency. The FBI promptly mounted its surveillance operation but by the time the story was leaked to the Post, the hunt for MEGA had been quietly dropped.

An explanation of why this happened surfaced on September 13, is a little remarked passage in the Starr report (Part VI, paragraph E). According to Lewinsky, testifying under oath, a meeting was arranged between herself and the president in the study attached to the Oval Office on March 29, 1997. Clinton was at the time on crutches due to a fall while visiting Florida. After intimacy, the Starr report says the two had a "lengthy conversation" in which Clinton "told her that he suspected that a foreign embassy (he did not specify which one) was tapping his telephones.." [the parentheses are in the Starr text].

This was an amazing revelation for the president of the U.S. to make to a young woman whom he knew to be talkative. And all the more amazing because he seemed to regard bugging "his" phones by a foreign government as nothing out of the ordinary. Perhaps it is routine as far as one particular country, Israel, is concerned. For, ever since its establishment Israel has exhibited a persistent pattern of spying on its closest ally, the U.S. Clearly, Clinton, as Israel's best ever friend in the White House, was not very worried about the telephone tap because he did not think it would be used against him. How wrong, or naive, could he be?

Because the White House network is secure, he apparently expected his friends phones' to be bugged. Knowing this, he recklessly carried on with Lewinsky and made her a reckless proposition. Instead of putting an end to their dangerous liaison and cutting off their salacious exchanges he told her that "if ever questioned.. she should say... they knew their calls were being monitored all along, and the phone sex was just a put on."

According to a British analyst, the phone tap was initiated soon after the MEGA slip in January when the FBI began its 24-hour surveillance of key administration officials. Sources in Tel Aviv told the analyst that a specialist unit of Mossad was dispatched promptly to Washington where the team tapped the Lewinsky phone in the Watergate complex made notorious 25 years ago by the bugging and burglary of Democratic Party campaign headquarters by President Richard Nixon's agents. Full transcripts of more than 30 sexually explicit calls between Clinton and Lewinsky were said to have been recorded by the Mossad bug.

An authoritative source in Washington confirmed the general proposition that Israeli bugging and blackmail halted the FBI hunt for MEGA while the Starr report's detailed chronology of contacts between the president and Lewinsky confirms the figure of 30 plus tapes. This was a period in which the two had frequent phone conversations but no intimate contact. The rate would have been an average of two or three calls a week over the 14 weeks covered by the mid-January to late April period coinciding with the MEGA investigation.

An insistent Lewinsky, who had been exiled to the Pentagon, rang Clinton repeatedly to press him to get her reappointed to the White House where they could meet. These contacts often resulted in phone sex. Once Mossad had a convincing collection of tapes, its operatives reportedly warned FBI counter-intelligence, with whom Mossad has a close working relationship, that if the hunt for MEGA was not called off Israel would leak extracts from the tapes to the press. The president's chief of staff was told, the information relayed to Clinton and the FBI was instructed to back off. At that moment, Clinton was highly vulnerable because of the Paula Jones sexual harassment suit which his lawyers were trying to postpone until the end of his term in office. On May 24, as the Supreme Court considered Clinton's claim that he should be immune from civil lawsuits, the president terminated his affair with Lewinksy. Three days later the Supreme Court ruled that Clinton could stand trial in a civil suit while president.

Another well informed Washington source told MEI that the FBI would not have dropped the MEGA investigation unless it was commanded to do so by the White House — and then only if a credible explanation for cancellation was proffered. FBI resentment over political interference stemming from the president's liaison with Lewinsky — which was common knowledge in Washington but not the country — could explain leaks to the Post and other publications. Massive Zionist pressure on the media would have made certain the MEGA story was killed as soon as it was launched, the source stated.

This source agreed that Netanyahu's entourage may have risked deploying MEGA because most of Israel's friends in the administration support the Labour/Peace Now camp in Israel and resent the Likud which they blame for destroying the peace process to which Clinton had committed the credibility of the U.S. as well as the prestige of his presidency.

— Middle East International

LETTERS

A salute to His Majesty

To the editor:

YOUR EDITORIAL (Oct. 23) clearly spells out that there isn't a shadow of mystery or cover-up regarding the illness and treatment of His Majesty King Hussein, an openness not common among leaders, past and present, in this part of the world.

And no person with a rational mind will disagree with Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh that His Majesty's participation in the peace talks at the Wye Plantation is "a manifestation of Jordan's key role to bring peace in this land" — land that has experienced immense loss of human life and dignity in the last half century.

More than that, arrival of His Majesty at the last stages of the hard negotiations shows beyond doubt his commitment and dedication to the ultimate goal of peace in this region, and a home for the people driven from their own homeland.

Political inclinations and prejudices aside, King Hussein stands out as a fearless brave personality who has been a rock in times of aggression, crisis and distress. Ready to make sacrifices for the just cause of the Palestinians, he has risked his life and Kingdom many times for the people of this land.

Even at a time when he bravely fights a serious disease, his eagerness and courage to contribute, "tremendously" in the words of President Clinton, to reach an agreement for peace in this land is laudable to say the least.

No one can predict if lasting peace will prevail in this land or not. And no one can deny His Majesty a unique place amongst the leaders who have ruled Arab countries during this turbulent half century.

Dr. Masud Ahmad Malik,
Amman.

Ps, Ps and more Ps

To the editor:

READING DR. YUSUF Mansur's article (Jordan Times Oct. 19), I looked in vain among the 3Ps of the Minister of Tourism which he quoted (Product, People, Promotion), and Dr. Mansur's 4Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion), for any reference to the conservation of Jordan's magnificent archaeological sites.

Jordan's ancient sites are the prime attraction for tourism to the country, but to refer to them in advertising jargon as "product," is to make it appear that their only value is as a backdrop for tourism. Tourists are notoriously destructive, and if the sites are used simply as exotic scenery for their activities, there will soon be few that will be worth visiting. These sites and monuments are of inestimable value as part of the history and culture not just of Jordan, but of the region and of the world: the Jordanian people — and the Jordanian government — should be the custodians of these treasures, not merely their promoters.

On the opposite page to Dr. Mansur's article was another of Rami Khouri's wonderful series about Jordan's ancient heritage. In it we read of the total lack of concern on the part of some authorities to prevent the wholesale destruction or pilfering of so many of Jordan's archaeological treasures. What is going to be left to promote — except an increasingly crumbling Petra and Jerash — if the people who should be caring for this heritage spend so much time and effort on advertising and promotion techniques?

If Jordan is to have sustainable tourism into the 21st century, urgent attention needs to be paid to two further Ps — Protection and Preservation.

Jane Taylor,
Amman.

Peace and tourism

To the editor,

I AM pleased to note a double-digit increase in tourism for Jordan. As part of a tour of the Holy Land, I visited Jordan in January of this year and was taken aback by the beauty of Jerash and Petra, the wonderful sound of the call to prayer from the village adjacent to Taybet Zaman, and the warm hospitality of the Jordanian people. As a travel agent I constantly encourage my clients to visit the Kingdom, but it is critical that the peace process, so espoused by your King, be successful so that Americans, who often times see the Middle East as a single entity and do not differentiate among countries, will feel safe in journeying to your land. As for myself, I plan to bring my family to Jordan for the Millennium!

Lynn Briody,
Lynn Briody Travel Consulting,
U.S.

The excavation of el-Mudaybi' Iron Age town

By Rami G. Khouri

(This is the second of two articles on the Karak Resources Project, on the excavations at the major Iron Age town of el-Mudaybi' and the study of ancient water storage systems. The first article last week reviewed the results of the overall regional surveys in several different sectors.)

IN 1997, the Karak Resources Project (KRP) opened a small-scale, problem-solving excavation at the impressive site of el-Mudaybi', strategically located in a gap of the western rim of Fajj al-'Usaykir, a wide, shallow, north-south valley between the Desert Highway to the east and the King's Highway to the west (and actually forming part of the Dead Sea geological fault system). Leading from the vicinity of Karak towards modern Saudi Arabia, this was an important communication and trading route in antiquity. The ancient fortifications of Mudaybi' were first built in the Iron Age; but the site's history of use is much more extensive, spanning the millennia from the Early Bronze through the Late Islamic periods. Four fragmentary and complete "proto-Aeolic" capitals were found on the surface of the site a few years ago, "suggesting that Mudaybi' had a special significance in the Iron Age II period, and such monumental architecture makes the question of the site's function even more intriguing," according to KRP director Dr. Jerry Mattingly of Johnson Bible College in Knoxville, Tennessee (USA).

The walled site measures some 83 x 89 metres, and is likely to have served as "an administrative centre for the tiny Moabite kingdom, for its strategic situation could have served both military and commercial interests," Dr Mattingly said in a recent interview in Amman. The KRP team was also interested in its location on the "desert fringe" of the plateau, making it a fine case study in the continuity and change in resource utilisation. The site has major tourism potential, given its historical importance, fine state of preservation, and easy accessibility (15 minutes east of the King's Highway), and it is also threatened with large-scale destruction by the active local stone-robbers who will no doubt soon start to haul away its many cut stones, as they have done at other ancient town sites on the Karak plateau. The excavations in 1997 ran from inside the site's northern, Iron Age wall into a later "acropolis," and from just outside the eastern, Iron Age gate into the site's elevated interior. Bedrock was not reached in any area, and excavated levels from 1997 date from the Iron II and the Late Byzantine through Late Islamic periods. Much stone tumble is almost certainly the result of seismic activity, the excavators concluded.

The Iron Age II remains are dominated by a monumental city gate with at least four large, elaborately carved "proto-Aeolic" capitals and as many lintels. This seems to have been a four-chamber gate measuring around 15 metres square. Debris removed from the gate's chambers and passageway included remnants of charred beams and reed impressions from the collapsed roof. The closest parallel to this gate at Mudaybi', Dr. Mattingly said, is the 9th Century BC Iron Age city gate of Beer-sheba III (Beer es-Sabe', in southern Israel/Palestine), though the oldest pottery excavated to date from the Mudaybi' gate is from the Late Iron II-Persian period (6th-4th Centuries BC).

More excavations are required to reach the foundations and ground surface of the original gate, in order to determine the date of its construction and use.

Two important ancient stone-carved Moabite stelae from the Karak Plateau, both reflecting strong Egyptian influences. At left, excavated at the site of Balua', the Balua' stele's central figure is commonly assumed to be a Moabite king of the people called the 'Shasu' in Egyptian texts of the 12th Century BC, flanked by what may be depictions of two Egyptian gods. At right is the 'Shihan Warrior' stele excavated at Rujm el-'Abd, at the foot of Jabal Shihan. This 13th-12th Century BC stone carving represents a warrior god holding a spear, and wearing an Egyptian-style loincloth (drawings courtesy of G. Mattingly)

Noteworthy capitals

The proto-Aeolic capitals of Mudaybi's gate are particularly important discoveries, for only about 40 such capitals are known from the entire Middle East, and these are among the largest and best preserved examples. They are also important because they were found in their original archaeological context.. Also called "volute," "palmette," or "proto-Ionic" capitals, they are characterised by spiral volutes on each end, flanking a central triangle, which itself is flanked by two smaller features of concentric circles that look like eyes, and thus are called 'oculi'. The distinctive Mudaybi' capitals use double lines to form the central triangles. The Mudaybi' capitals all seem to have been sculpted by the same stonemason, using a single plan. The size of the capitals — nearly two metres long, a metre high, and half-a-metre thick — indicates without doubt that they were used in monumental architecture at ancient administrative centres (in Palestine), and are usually found associated with gate complexes. It is assumed, but not yet confirmed, that the same situation pertains at Mudaybi'. The base of a new capital excavated at Mudaybi' measures 1.65 metres long — precisely the width of the pier wall of the gate — and it was found where it had fallen off the end of the gate pier. This is the first time that such capitals have been found in their original architectural and archaeological context, which confirms the use of the capitals on the pier walls of the gate. The excavation also revealed several lintels which seem to have spanned an opening between two pier walls within the gate complex. The hypothetical reconstruction of the gate would have had the capitals sitting on top of the pier walls, and the lintels resting on top of the capitals, parallel to the capitals and the gate passageway, Dr Mattingly said.

The 30-member team in 1997 included six specialists who researched the area around Mudaybi', aiming to place this ancient walled town within its broader historical, cultural, and environmental contexts. They looked at the plateau's geology and soils, geomorphology, botany, environmental conservation, and the changing bedouin and village cultures of today. Studies of the "immediate neighbourhood" of each site, within a one-kilometre radius, allow the team to identify ancient features such as cisterns, dams, quarries, and water channels, and modern building activities. All off-site investigations have concentrated on resource exploitation, Dr. Mattingly explained, and the ethnographic studies are designed "to illuminate patterns of continuity and change in the region."

Water studies

One potentially particularly important aspect of the project is the study of "the variety of methods that people on the Karak Plateau have historically retrieved and stored water," Dr. Mattingly said. The team is documenting the many water systems that were or are still being used in the area, including cisterns, wells, reservoirs and water drainage and retention systems. A particularly novel system documented at Nakhl comprised a series of stone dams with associated cisterns built in the wadi, and designed to retain the surface runoff water in winter. Other effective water retention systems they documented were based on long water channels that drained runoff water into cisterns, and cisterns that were strategically located relatively high on a slope, and thus designed primarily to capture rainwater for use later in the lower ground nearby.

An initial paper on the cisterns of the Karak Plateau, by team member James H. Pace from Elon College in North Carolina, recorded 63 well preserved water storage facilities or cisterns at the 17 sites examined in 1995. They documented a range of facilities, including: the facility known in Arabic as a qi' ('ditch'), in which an open excavation or unroofed cave was adapted for water storage use, in some cases with steps leading down to the water; the bi'r ('well'), a pear- or bottle-shaped cistern dug into the rock and capped by wellheads or collars, often with adjacent watering troughs for animals, and usually plastered on the inside; and, the khazzan ('reservoir') or birka ('pool'), often built and used collectively by the community and usually based on the principle of built dams in low areas that allowed runoff water to be channelled into the storage facility. The research to date suggests that water was not scarce on the Karak Plateau, and that ancient inhabitants of the area knew where to find water and usually located their settlements there. "Water storage facilities are located in karstic limestone formations, and this is precisely where the population settled," Mr. Pace notes in his study.

Crucial local support The KRP has been funded to date from sponsoring universities, individuals, churches, private businesses, and some local sponsors and contributors in Jordan. It relies heavily on donations from private sources in Jordan and the United States, and gratefully accepts in-kind contributions to the work that takes place in Jordan every other year. In appreciation of the support that they have received from many Jordanian individuals and institutions, the KRP project directors have recently established a non-profit Karak Foundation in the United States, which aims to explore means of assisting the human development of the Karak region, as well as studying its ancient history and culture. The next field season is planned for summer 1999.

Culture

Cut-out facsimile of Alhambra's architecture on the folds of the poetry book, "Twelve Lanterns" by Adonis, designed by Boulatta

Kamal Boullatta at the Darat Al Funun:

Windows on Granada and Jerusalem — where poetry, painting and architecture fuse

By Sally Bland

THE WORKS of Kamal Boullatta currently exhibited at Darat Al Funun, in Jabal Weibdeh, span the experience of three continents. They also reveal the intersection between Christian and Muslim aesthetic traditions, and between different art forms, particularly painting, poetry and architecture. A quick glance is enough to be impressed by the beautiful colours, geometric shapes and interplay of space and light which are the hallmarks of the exhibition. A keener eye may penetrate Boullatta's recurrent squares and rectangles to discover the imprint of enforced exile experienced by this Jerusalem-born, Palestinian-American artist, who now resides in France.

On display in the Middle Hall at Darat Al Funun is the Granada portfolio, a multimedia collaboration undertaken by Boullatta and the poet Adonis upon visiting Granada and Alhambra palace, built by the Arabs in 14th century Spain. On site, Adonis wrote a 12-part poem entitled "Twelve Lanterns for Granada," while Boullatta later recorded his response to Alhambra in a series of 12 handpainted silk-screens. Together, they celebrate the fusion of Arab and European civilisation in the Andulsia of old, with a contemporary mix of poetry and visual art.

The centrepiece of the Granada exhibit is an exquisite handmade book in which Adonis's poem is printed on pages which fold out like an accordion, arranged in a way to emulate the grouping of Alhambra's windows and archways. Between each three pages of the poem, Boullatta crafted a folded page, cutting into the fold itself to make three-dimensional pop-ups which suggest the embedded niches of Alhambra. A further dimension is added as light filters through the cut-outs, casting shadows of the design on one side of the book. The effect is similar to afternoon sun streaming through the high, vaulted windows of a European cathedral — an unexpected twist, since Alhambra is considered a prototype of Islamic architecture.

According to Boullatta, "the accordion format of the book was selected in an attempt to give body to Adonis's words in a way that would evoke the kind of interplay between poetry and architecture manifest in Alhambra," where the walls are embellished with tiles bearing inscriptions from the Quran and Arabic poems. The reader is invited "to meander round a paper structure and see... how the poet's voice assumes an architectural form." Each angle gives a new perspective and depth, lending paper and text the quality of architecture — capturing and releasing light and space. To explain how the design evolved, Boullatta quotes art historian Oleg Grabar's comparison of Alhambra to "a Chinese box in which squares and rectangles create squares within squares and the unit as a whole is completed with a small projecting square, which... closes the unit off not with a wall but with a view to the outside world." For his part, Boullatta set out to offer the poem "a view to the outside world," accentuating its cross-cultural message:

Here are Granada's footsteps
A singular ink writing the song of the universe

— Adonis, "Twelve Lanterns for Granada, stanza XII

(The poem is available in twin editions, Spanish-Arabic and French-English.)

The graphic counterpart to the poem is Boullatta's set of 12 square silk-screen prints. Six are predominantly in cool colours — shades of blue, green and purple, while the other six literally scream with the brightness of orange, shocking pink and yellow. To describe these prints one might resort to a language of flatness for they resemble rectangular columns diagonally sliced by stripes, or strips of interwoven coloured paper. Yet the visual effect is so full of light and motion as to suggest a more complex origin. Again the source of inspiration is Alhambra. Boullatta says he chose a field of colour that "mirrors the role played by the mosaic ceramic tiles which contrast the engraved texture of the Arabic verses on Alhambra's walls. The underlying structure governing each print is based on a geometric principle of symmetrical and repetitive relations that generated many of the patterns found in Alhambra's tiles."

Homage to Jerusalem

While the Granada portfolio will travel to Ramallah, the other part of Boullatta's exhibition, a Homage to Jerusalem entitled "Surrat al-Ard," was commissioned by the Shoman Foundation and will be housed in Amman. Like the Granada portfolio, it draws on the motifs of architecture and ancient civilisation filtered through the lens of contemporary experience.

Growing up in Jerusalem, Boullatta's visual world was peopled by Byzantine icons at home, and the churches and mosques outside in the Old City. He remembers being most impressed by the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre, the Dome of the Rock and the Ascension Church. The artist credits his fascination with geometric patterns and symmetry to these early memories of images rooted in the East. This fascination persisted throughout his art study in Rome and the 25 years he spent in the U.S., where he singled out geometrical elements in modern abstract art and even quilting patterns, and adapted them in his earlier calligraphy-based works.

Then, in the early 1990s, Boullatta went to Morocco and Spain to do research in Islamic art. "After years of working on the exploration of the square, the eight-pointed star generated by two squares intersecting at 45 degrees intrigued me. The octagonal star not only seemed to be at the centre of every arabesque I examined, but its configuration... formed the master grid of endless patterns." It was also the blueprint for the three Jerusalem sanctuaries mentioned earlier, and for the central structure of Alhambra.

"Surrat al-Ard" means "the navel of the earth," and is the medieval term used to refer to the Rock of the Noble Sanctuary in Jerusalem, signifying its centrality. It serves as the title for Boullatta's series of 12 acrylic paintings which are the distillation of his study of the octagonal star. All the paintings are composed of overlapping and intersecting squares that break into smaller components and regroup again into rectangles. Boullatta seems to be playing or experimenting with the two squares that make up the octagonal star — turning, twisting, layering and superimposing them to attain a variety of effects. The ornamental detail (zahrafi) of eastern art has been stripped away to the pure abstraction of geometry and symmetry. But is it as simple as that? Or are the symmetry and abstraction illusions?

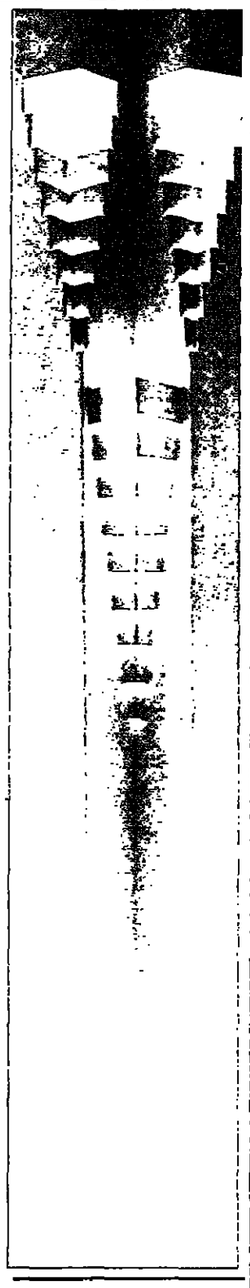
Some of the paintings seem to be moving inwards towards the centre, entering one interconnected chamber after another. In others, a square or rectangle looms up as if to block the path. These contradictory motions of entry and exclusion correspond to the theme of the film, "Stranger at Home," which can be viewed on a video-screen at the exhibition. Here a Dutch filmmaker shows Boullatta in the 80s, returning to the Jerusalem of his memories after many years in exile, but excluded from permanent residence there by Israeli policy. "It was strange to be a tourist staying in a hotel, but at home," he says of the experience.

The disjunction between the impossibility of permanent return for a native Jerusalemite, while any Jewish person may live there according to the Israeli Law of Return, is mirrored in the paintings' lack of symmetry. "My works give the illusion of symmetry," says Boullatta, "but they are not actually symmetrical. This reflects my life as an American and a Palestinian. This is my search for the symmetry which is not there."

All but one of the "Surrat al-Ard" paintings are in pastel or medium-tone colours. Only "Anastasis," named after a chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, is executed in deep, brilliant shades of blue, red and green. Boullatta declines to say why he used completely different shades of colour for this one painting, because his is a viewer-oriented art. "I am for painting that invites contemplation. Throughout history, art has drawn humans to a higher state of consciousness. In the modern world we are bombarded by visual stuff. I noticed this coming to Amman — everything from advertisements to movie posters. I don't see how we can absorb all this. If these paintings help a person in Amman go out and see a flower, I would have gotten my message across — to retrain the eye."

"Surrat al-Ard" finds a perfect complement in the adjacent exhibition by Said Nuseibeh entitled "The Farthest Mosque." In richly coloured photographs, Nuseibeh presents both the architectural structure and ornamental detail of the Dome of the Rock and other holy sites of Jerusalem which inspired Boullatta's works. Comparing the photo with the painting is especially interesting, since Nuseibeh's lens has skilfully captured the natural light falling on these shrines which Boullatta created with a paintbrush.

Words are far too linear to reflect the experience of seeing this exhibition. Words lack the depth and the interplay of shadow and light, which are at the heart of why Kamal Boullatta's works are not just geometry and far from being as abstract as they sound in description. In short, exhibitions are made to be seen, not only written and read about.



Cut-out facsimile of Alhambra's architecture on the folds of the poetry book, "Twelve Lanterns" by Adonis, designed by Boulatta

Deal with Lafarge sparks harsh criticism

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh

AMMAN — An agreement to sell off 33 per cent of the blue-chip Jordan Cement Factories Company (JCFC) to a French firm has sparked harsh criticism among many parliamentarians and JCFC employees who oppose the privatisation of major state assets.

The government, which owns 49.3 per cent of the country's sole cement producer, and French cement giant Lafarge on Friday concluded a JD72 million deal to sell 20 million of its shares to the French firm at JD3.6 a share, a premium of 100 per cent of the share's closing price of JD1.8, officials said.

Final approval of the deal, the largest equity transaction in Jordan's history, is pending the likely ratification of the Cabinet.

"Most deputies are against selling off any shares of the cement firm," Deputy Abdul Karim Dughmi said.

He said the government is "breaking the promise" it made to lawmakers earlier this year after a debate on the merits of privatising state-owned enterprises.

More than 50 deputies in the 80-seat House have signed a petition asking the government to halt the selling of its shares in major firms to foreign partners.

However, head of the House Finance and Economic Committee Ali Abul Ragheb told the Jordan Times that he believed the deal does not contradict the committee's recommendations opposing a sale to a strategic partner. The French company had not insisted on management control of the firm, rendering it a mere shareholder and not a strategic partner.

This key element, should help the government fend off criticism that it is selling its share in this major mining industry to a strategic partner.

The firm's chairman of the board, Hamdi Tabbaa, who has been a strong opponent of strategic partnership, was a member of the government's negotiating team with Lafarge. He described the sale as "a good deal" for the firm because it will bring in new expertise and marketing skills to the company without giving Lafarge "an upper hand in the management structure or any veto power."

According to deputy Nazih Ammarin, the JCFC is one of the leading and economically successful companies in Jordan.

"There is no need and no national interest to allow a foreign investor to own shares in this firm," he stressed.

The company, which recorded JD11.9 million net profit in 1997 and which enjoys a monopoly until 2001, has been facing a difficult time as demand has slumped from Asian countries and the uncertainty clouding the future of the Middle East peace process has hindered efforts to penetrate the lucrative Palestinian market.

The Construction Workers' Union, concerned with the plight of 520 temporary coworkers who could be affected by the new agreement, plans to hold a one-hour sit-in on Wednesday to protest the sale and demand that the rights of employees be guaranteed.

According to Issa Qaddah, a cement factory employee, many are worried that more than 500 of the company's 3,000 workers could be added to the long list of unemployed Jordanians after the deal goes through.

"The main priority of a new foreign investor will not be securing the best interest of the Jordanian worker but rather obtaining its own financial gain," Qaddah, who is also a member of the union, told the Jordan Times Sunday.

Realising that the workers may not be able to stop the government's plan to privatise the JCFC, Qaddah said the union is seeking guarantees that the new investor not be allowed to hire and dismiss employees, and that the management remains Jordanian.

Many Jordanians opposed to privatisation fear that national assets could be relinquished to foreigners and the country's business elite could be the only ones to gain.

Others harbour fears a strategic investor would be a gateway for an Israeli economic stronghold, a reason why many mainstream Jordanians who remain hostile to Israel despite the now four-year-old peace treaty, oppose privatisation.

IMF official says Egypt performing well

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's economy is weathering storms in global emerging markets and a weaker dollar should help its trade balance, a senior IMF official said Sunday.

Graham Hacche, chief of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) World Economic Studies Division, told Reuters in an interview that Egypt had been hit less than many countries by the knock-on effects of the financial turmoil in Asia.

He said Egypt had escaped contagion from Asia or Russia partly because its direct trade links were mostly with the United States and Europe, where growth has stayed healthy.

Its financial markets were not as deep or as well-developed as in other countries, so less vulnerable to financial shocks.

"While much of the world has been suffering from the Asian crisis through direct links with the Asian countries, the situation in Egypt has been rather different," Hacche said.

"Egypt has suffered partly from the shock to tourism caused by the (Luxor) terrorist incident last year, which has had an unfortunate effect on tourism earnings," he said.

"The other major development has been the weakness of oil prices in the last couple of years that has affected not only Egypt's oil export earnings, but also workers' remittances from neighbouring countries that are also dependent on oil," he added.

Hacche, speaking on the sidelines of a seminar arranged by the Egyptian Centre for Economic Studies, said the IMF expected Egypt's economy to grow five per cent in calendar 1998, the same as in 1997, and the annual inflation rate to fall to 3.3 per cent from 6.2 per cent.

"Growth of five per cent, inflation of three per cent, that's a pretty good economic performance," he said.

Hacche said Egypt's current account would move into deficit this year, but not widen to a particularly disturbing level.

The IMF projects that Egypt will record a current account deficit equivalent to 2.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in calendar 1998, compared to a 0.2 per cent surplus in 1997.

"The widening of the deficit provides additional impetus and incentive for the Egyptian government to maintain progress with structural reforms and make further headway with fiscal consolidation in reducing its budget deficit and economising on its public expenditures," Hacche said.

Egypt launched IMF-backed reforms in the early 1990s with impressive macroeconomic results, achieving a budget deficit of less than one per cent of GDP in fiscal 1997/8 (July-June).

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates — Prices as at 25/10/98 17:06

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.6390	0.5922	1.3390	118.05	1.5463	1622.30	1.8480	5.4925
DE Mark	0.6101	-	0.3609	0.8169	72.02	0.9429	989.21	1.1273	3.3502
GB Sterling	1.6885	2.7686	-	2.2609	199.41	2.6109	2739.25	3.1203	9.2741
CH Franc	0.7468	122.31	0.4417	-	88.14	1.1540	1210.67	137.91	4.0989
JP Yen	0.0085	1.3872	0.5010	1.1333	-	1.3088	13.73	156.41	4.6488
CA Dollar	0.6467	1.0485	0.3799	0.8519	1.31	-	1037.76	1.1829	3.5160
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0100	0.3647	0.0825	1375.71	0.9629	-	11.39	3.3846
NL Guilder	0.5411	88.67	0.3202	72.46	63.85	0.8365	877.63	-	2.9713
FR Franc	0.1821	0.2984	0.1077	24.3700	21.48	0.2815	33.64	33.6400	-

Middle Eastern Currencies

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7504	0.3770	3.6405	0.3012	3.6727	1501.00	3.4260
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2897	0.5317	5.1347	0.4248	5.1801	2117.07	4.8322
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0803	0.98	400.22	0.9135
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8808	9.9488	-	9.66	0.7990	9.74	3981.75	9.0883
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0302	1.0302	-	0.0827	1.01	412.31	0.9411
Kuwait Dinar	3.3201	2.3539	12.4515	1.2516	12.09	-	12.19	4983.40	9.9411
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0212	0.1026	0.9912	0.0820	-	408.69	0.9328
Lebanese/1000	0.67	0.4724	2.4986	0.2511	2.4254	0.2007	2.4488	-	2.2825
Egyptian	0.2919	0.2069	1.0947	0.1100	1.0626	0.0879	1.0720	438.12	-

Energy

Oils	Last	revious
Brent	0.00	0.00
W. Texas	14.02	13.96
Bonny	0.00	0.00
Dubai	12.48	12.45
UL Gas	138.00	138.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4373	0.15791	0.3573	31.503
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.44653	0.16125	0.36486	32.1699
KW Dinar	3.3201	5.44366	1.96618	4.4484	392.311
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.34972	1.57109	3.55492	313.381
CY Pound	2.0541	3.3667	1.2158	2.7504	242.487

Metal Prices

Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	292.9	293.4
Silver (oz's)	4.86	4.89
Platinum (oz's)	337	340
AL (3 Months)	1322	1327
CU (3 Months)	1614	1618
Zinc (3 Months)	957	962
Lead (3 Months)	505	510
NI (3 Months)	4040	4060

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)

Period / C'ncy	- 1 - Month	- 3 - Months	- 6 - Months	- 1 - Year
USD	5.2197	5.2092	4.9694	4.7500
GBP	7.3922	7.1328	6.8763	6.5653
JPY	0.3367	0.3989	0.4406	0.4678
DEM	3.5000	3.5625	3.5303	3.4975
FRF	3.5000	1.3497	1.3994	1.4813
CHF	1.1747	3.5781	3.5313	3.5078
ITL	4.6440	4.3490	3.9070	-

Main Equity Indices

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	8452.29	-80.85	-0.95	8531.34	8426.81	8533.14
Newyork	S&P 500	1070.67	-7.81	-0.72	1078.48	1067.43	1078.48
London	FT-SE 100	5217.1	-12.8	-0.24	5238.3	5159.9	5229.9
Tokyo	NIKKIE 225	14144.7	-150.86	-1.06	14523.5	14042.6	14295.6
Paris	CAC 40	3393.76	-27.16	-0.79	3415.56	3358.34	3420.92
Frankfurt	DAX	4451.09	-3.19	-0.07	4491.05	4427.37	4454.28

Energy

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	106.08	Spot
Cocoa ($/ton)	1950	Spot
Sugar ($/ton)	222	Spot
Wheat ($/ton)	122	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	25.14	Spot
Tea (stg/kg)	125	Spot
Barley ($/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice ($/ton)	395	Spot

* JOD Cross Rates

Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1946	1.2006
DE Mark	0.4313	0.4335
CH Franc	0.5285	0.5311
FR Franc	0.1288	0.1294
JP Yen	0.5995	0.6025
NL Guilder	0.3825	0.3844
IT Lira	0.4359	0.4381

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Air Canada highlights services

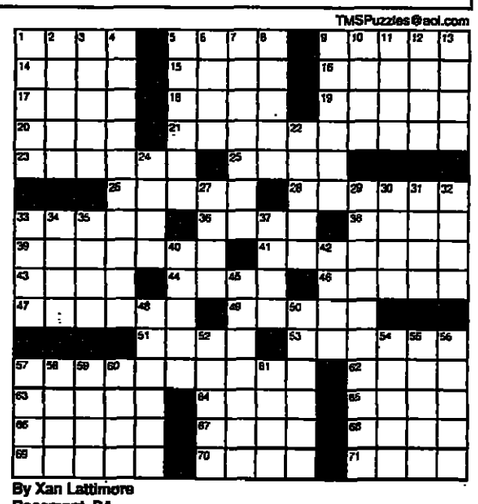
AIR CANADA-Jordan held a reception/dinner at Le Meridien Hotel in Amman this week. The function was attended by Mike Molloy, Canadian ambassador to Jordan, Jaser Zayyad, director general of Civil Aviation Authority, Robert Boulert, general passenger sales manager-developing markets, Mohammad Hijazi, general manager of Nahas Travel & Tourism and general sales agents for Air Canada, and some senior Royal Jordanian staff and many active travel agents.

Boulert highlighted Air Canada as being one of the top 20 carriers in the world carrying over 14 million passengers a year. He said it was the first carrier to offer an intercontinental business class and that it is one of the founder members of Star Alliance. He concluded by noting that Air Canada is also the first carrier in the world to offer a totally smoke-free environment.

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



ACROSS
1 Highlander
5 Very dry, as champagne
9 Sacked out
14 Saudi, e.g.
15 Millennia
16 Native American emblem
17 Second Greek letter
18 Kelp, e.g.
19 Stir into activity
20 River to the Baltic
21 Gridiron offense
23 Lymphoid mass in the mouth
25 Brit. decorations
26 Toll of the bell
28 Shoe style
33 Characteristic
36 Rochester's love
38 Bundled package
39 Wilder play
41 Ubiquitous
43 Town in N. France
44 Aroma
46 Licorice flavor
47 Precipitation event
49 __ and effect
51 Coll. senior's exam
53 Stop
57 Vintage car
62 Christmas decoration
63 Century plant
64 Bassoon's cousin
65 Novelist Connell
66 Bar for lifting
67 Back end
68 Feels ill
69 Minuscule
70 Sea eagles
71 Leg punch?

DOWN
1 Wooden shoe
2 I believe, in Latin
3 Like Cheerios
4 Aspen ride
5 Lennon or McCartney
6 "The Deputy" playwright Hochhuth
7 Impious
8 Russian rulers
9 Paste gem
10 Take spoils
11 Needle case
12 Chilean money
13 Fed. agents
22 Highway inn
24 Division word
27 Allow to use
29 Prime cut
30 Sitarist Shankar
31 Pub preferences
32 Mere's mate
33 Flip
34 Judges' follower
35 Singer Guthrie
37 __ avis
40 Supremely bad
42 Emit a beam of light
45 Supreme Court opening month
48 Sleuth Queen
50 Cow organs
52 Era
54 Monte of the 1950's Giants
55 Bobby of the Chicago Seven
56 High-strung
57 Beer ingredient
58 Curved molding
59 Kline movie
60 Uniform
61 Horse of a different color

By Xan Lattimore
Rosemont, PA

P	A	L	E		B	I	B	L	E		C	A	R	D
A	L	I	T		O	C	E	A	N		O	L	I	O
P	U	S	H	T	H	E	E	N	V	E	L	O	P	E
A	M	P	E	R	E		R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R
			R	A	M	P		S	E	T				
P	U	B		M	I	L	K		D	I	C	I	N	G
A	B	A	S		A	U	R	A		C	O	L	O	R
G	O	D	O	W	N	T	O	T	H	E	W	I	R	E
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				G	U	S		C	E	O	S			
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T	A	K	E	S	T	O	T	H	E	L	I	M	I	T
A	M	E	N		A	L	I	A	S		M	I	C	E
R	E	S	T		N	E	R	D	S		P	R	E	P

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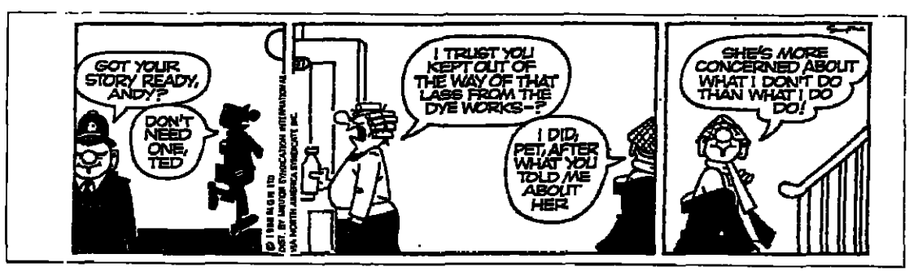
Peanuts

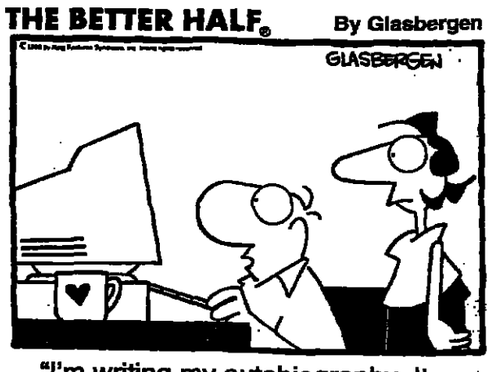
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

THE BETTER HALF®

By Glasbergen



"I'm writing my autobiography. It might give me the incentive I need to make my life more interesting."

JUMBLE®

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NEEMY

REESA

DISNAL

SMIBUT

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MURKY PUTTY UNHOLY EXCISE
Answer: What the barber gave his customer — A SHORT CUT

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Gaza port becomes a contentious subject on how it would affect Aqaba

** COMMENTING ON the Wye River Memorandum signed by the Palestinian and Israeli leaders Friday, a prominent industrialist said the opening of a Gaza port would have positive and negative dimensions. According to Abdul Noor Habaibeh, the secretary of the Amman Chamber of Industry, there is a possibility that the volume of goods imported through Aqaba will decline as a result of competition from the Gaza port, "this would greatly affect the commercial activity," he said.

The positive dimension would be the smooth flow of goods directly from and to Gaza in one load and without any barrier that Israel may impose or additional fees, Habaibeh indicated. He said the charges could be at the same level of costs on transport between Amman, Baghdad, Damascus and Ankara. "Such a process would encourage the import/export activity between Gaza and Europe," Habaibeh said.

He stressed that the construction of the Palestinian port will encourage most vessels to bypass the Suez Canal, especially those coming from the Black Sea and Russia, to minimise the cost of transport and shorten the time. In addition, the Gaza port will activate the export activity to Europe, he emphasised.

Habaibeh saw the transport activity between Jordan and the Palestinian territories flourishing if an advanced mechanism is formulated to link the ports of Aqaba and Gaza. "Such a link would reflect greatly on both the Jordanian and Palestinian economies at the same time," he said urging both sides to boost bilateral coordination in this regard.

Momdouh Abu Hassan, a businessman, did not agree that the activity at Aqaba will be affected when the Gaza port is opened. He justified his view by saying that some Jordanian traders have recently resorted to importing their goods through Haifa. Consequently, he added, upon opening the Palestinian port, most of those traders will shift their dealings with the port of Gaza due to lesser costs and shorter time. That will have a positive effect on the activity and economy of the Palestinians.

According to Abu Hassan, the transport of goods between Jordan and Palestine will be direct and will not face any hindrances. The businessman expressed optimism over Wye River accord especially that it showed international interest in reviving the economies of the region. "This will be beneficial to the people as it will be possible to move out of the present recession," Abu Hassan stressed.

Yanal Bustami, first deputy to the president of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, said it is premature to talk about the opening of Gaza port and the effect of that on the port of Aqaba. He noted that the positive effects of the accord will reflect on the economic activity in the region.

Bustami pointed out that after few weeks, the Jordanian side will conduct a comprehensive study on the economic ties with the Palestinians and all the Arab countries. There will also be a study on the feasibility of developing ties in light of the agreement in order to seize all available opportunities (Al Arab Al Yawm).

Arab Bank announces two new accounts for investment in euro

CHAIRMAN OF the Board of Directors and General Manager of the Arab Bank Abdul Majid Shouman ended a workshop on the impacts of the euro on the bank's transactions in which highly selected general managers of the bank's branches and the regional managers as well as senior bank officials participated.

Shouman declared that the workshop was crowned with success through presenting a complete image of the branches of the bank's mechanism and its affiliated institutions in Europe as well as regulations governing its transactions, whether retail or wholesale transactions.

Shouman also said that the participants in the workshop touched upon the theoretical aspects of the impacts of the euro on the bank's transactions then moved to the practical aspects.

A bank official said that the Arab Bank will establish a central unit in Europe which will be associated either completely or partially with the bank's operating branches in Europe in order to facilitate the bank's transactions and its affiliated institutions operating outside the European Union (EU) with the branches working in the EU. Thus, the Arab Bank will regulate the relations between the bank and its branches in the EU and outside the EU.

The bank will begin extending a variety of services pertaining to opening account in the new currency (euro) whether they are current accounts or term deposits. The bank has put the final touches on opening such accounts as of 1/1/1999.

DR. MOHAMMAD M. ARIQAT
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C.E.S DE PNEUMO-PHTISIOLOGIE
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4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

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R.A.M.S Oct.31/At 6 PM Tel 5528601

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Come one or come all, just be there.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Follow orders quickly and precisely today and tomorrow. The action will be fast and furious, and there won't be time to argue. There's more room for discussion on Wednesday or Thursday. Put your two cents' worth in then. Listen more than you talk on Friday and Saturday if you want to make point, watch your back on Sunday.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Travel with a partner or plan your next vacation today and tomorrow. At least have dinner at a foreign restaurant. Everyone's cantankerous on Wednesday and Thursday, even you. Take it slowly, and try not to give up much ground. Friends rescue you on Friday and Saturday. You can goof off then, but scurry to keep up with obligations Sunday.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) The money is available today and tomorrow, if you know where to look. Read up on the subject. Travel beckons Wednesday and Thursday, though work interferes. Make plans, but don't go yet. You could get a career break on Friday, and another on Saturday from an unexpected source. So look sharp. The party may be Saturday night, but you'll play all day Sunday, too. You need the break.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) A partner's got a great idea today, and an even better one tomorrow. Encourage the other's creativity and you prosper, too. Do paperwork to get money on Wednesday and Thursday, and try to get off early Friday. Your chances are good. Travel through Saturday looks fine, especially by water. Follow orders Sunday to save yourself some trouble.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) The workload is tough today and tomorrow, but don't complain. By Wednesday and Thursday, you'll have the help you need, especially if you set it up that way. Don't leave anything to chance. Friday and Saturday are good days to get the money, and also the attention. On Sunday, travel looks good once your roommate's needs have been met.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You're intensely passionate today and tomorrow, and very lucky in love. That'll be fun. Make decisions at work on Thursday and Friday to streamline your procedures. Saturday is good for talking things over with a partner, and Sunday is best for taking a calculated risk. The longer you calculate, the less you're at risk.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Put money into household items today and tomorrow. It's a good investment. An attractive admirer is impressed with your taste on Wednesday and Thursday, especially if you've planned ahead. You're very creative Friday and Saturday, but work is still required. Relax on Sunday by letting your mate make all the decision.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) The sun is in Scorpio and the moon is in Capricorn. Practice new skills today and tomorrow to advance in your career. Watch out for technical difficulties at home on Wednesday and Thursday. Romance blossoms Friday and Saturday with an old favourite. Passions are intense on Sunday. Be careful not to get burned.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You're in a practical mood today and tomorrow, so make buying decisions. A secret source is your best bet. Study the issues carefully Wednesday and Thursday before making decisions. Consequences could be hard to change later. Have the party at your house Friday and go trick-or-treating together. You'll all want to travel this weekend, and why not?.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) You're strong today and tomorrow, and friends heed your advice. Make an investment Wednesday or Thursday in a dream you've long held hidden. It's just a question of saving your money; that's something you can make happen. Your curiosity is overwhelming Friday and Saturday, with many delightful surprises in store. Stick close to home on Sunday to recuperate.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 18) You're under pressure today and tomorrow and it's pointless to resist. Go along with the programme. You're stronger Wednesday and Thursday. Put in your corrections then. Ask for more money on Friday, so you can spend more on Saturday. Keep an open mind on Sunday and you'll learn a lot.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) Your friends provide inspiration today and tomorrow, but you may wish you had a map Wednesday and Thursday to find your way through a maze. By Friday, you're in the clear again, and you look marvellous through Saturday. Buy yourself a special treat on Sunday, just for the fun of it.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
TELEPHONE: 5607171 / 5607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 25/10/1998

	PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
	355.000	170.000	ARAB BANK	16.6	.99	8	420	85330	204.00	203.00	1.00-
	1.920	1.500	JOR.NATIONAL BK.	12.4	4.58	12	8154	12402	1.51	1.53	.02+
S	3.200	1.000	BANK OF JORDAN	E	0.00	5	5100	5386	1.07	1.05	.02-
	1.300	.890	MID.EAST INV.BK.	64.4	0.00	7	3250	3163	.95	.98	.03+
+S	2.480	1.480	INDUSTRIAL DEV.BK.	10.3	7.05	10	1195	1759	1.48	1.47	.01-
S	6.510	2.610	THE HOUSING BK.	16.7	3.79	32	10096	26826	2.67	2.64	.03-
S	3.450	1.750	JOR.KUWAIT BANK	1.1	0.00	7	52715	97521	1.78	1.85	.07+
	.800	.430	JOR.GULF BANK	g	0.00	9	31000	18290	.59	.59	-
S	3.910	1.540	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	16.2	0.00	22	11598	18196	1.56	1.59	.03+
+	.970	.700	REST.AL-MAL (REITNA)	3.4	0.00	1	250	173	.70	.69	.01-
	.850	.602	PHILADEL.INV.BK.	P	0.00	3	944	575	.62	.61	.01-
	BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 266.76	%CHG: -0.40	116	124722	269619			
	3.100	2.700	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.9	5.00	3	3700	11100	3.00	3.00	-
	INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 124.00	%CHG: 0.00	3	3700	11100			
S	2.240	1.410	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	9.3	5.77	26	15510	22102	1.44	1.43	.01-
	3.660	1.550	IRB:D ELECTRICITY	10.1	6.10	2	200	340	1.73	1.64	.09-
	1.220	.620	PATL. PORTFOLIO	27.5	0.00	30	16950	11849	.69	.69	-
S	4.600	1.870	ARAB INTL.INV.EDUC.	9.3	2.13	1	1500	2820	1.88	1.88	-
	1.790	1.060	UNIFIED CO.	6.8	10.09	4	400	437	1.10	1.09	.01-
	1.350	1.000	UNITED FOR FINAN.INV	1.3	6.43	7	65000	65000	1.00	1.00	-
	SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 104.19	%CHG: -0.14	70	99560	102548			
	4.110	1.050	JOR.PHOSPHATE MINES	12.5	0.00	23	82836	97746	1.12	1.18	.06+
	11.250	10.050	JOR. PETROL.REFINARY	9.8	8.78	17	1295	13137	10.22	10.12	.10-
S	5.740	2.400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	6.9	2.98	13	4050	10277	2.53	2.52	.01-
	1.440	1.020	JOR.PIPES MANFCT.	8.7	9.52	1	250	263	1.05	1.05	-
	6.350	4.700	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	6.1	6.89	19	2184	11144	5.05	5.08	.03+
	.530	.350	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12.5	0.00	13	7000	2590	.37	.37	-
	.770	.370	NATIONAL STREL IND.	g	0.00	1	200	94	.49	.47	.02-
	.540	.280	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	7	6400	1920	.30	.30	-
+S	2.090	.640	NATL.CABLE WIRE.MFAC	29.5	0.00	7	900	567	.64	.63	.01-
	.660	.360	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	7.0	0.00	3	2000	740	.38	.37	.01-
	1.470	1.150	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	13.0	5.08	14	3225	3775	1.17	1.18	.01+
	.650	.380	KAWTHER INVEST.	g	0.00	1	500	190	.39	.38	.01-
S	1.260	.530	UNIV. MODN.INDS.	9.6	10.00	26	24450	14518	.62	.60	.02-
	.880	.460	JOR.INDS.RESOURCES	g	0.00	2	500	230	.46	.46	-
+	1.560	1.170	NATL. CHLORINE	8.1	8.62	10	9196	10724	1.18	1.16	.02-
	1.080	.600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	8.6	16.39	6	4550	2776	.63	.61	.02-
S	1.310	.910	INTL. TOBACCO	7.4	5.50	8	2987	3155	1.05	1.06	.01+
	.730	.580	NAT.ALUMINIUM.	32.7	0.00	6	6150	4059	.65	.66	.01+
	.670	.520	MID.EAST COMPLEX	9.8	0.00	5	4450	2361	.52	.54	.02+
	INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 72.08	%CHG: +0.27	186	163236	180779			
	GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 160.94	%CHG: -0.23	375	391218	564046			

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 25/10/1998

N	1.050	.790	EXPORT & FIN.BNK.75%	10.2	0.00	4	13500	7425	.80	.80	-
N	.950	.730	AMMAN INSURANCE	E	0.00	1	250	223	.85	.89	.04+
	.480	.340	JOR.TRADE FAC.	g	0.00	6	24500	9310	.37	.38	.01+
	.790	.500	UNION INV.	g	0.00	1	500	270	.54	.54	-
	.620	.210	ARAB FIN.INVEST.	g	0.00	6	6800	1496	.22	.22	-
†N	1.000	1.000	FALCON INV.& FIN.CO.	E	0.00	2	200	210	1.00	1.05	.05+
	.220	.090	JOR.INDS.MATCH-JEMCO	g	0.00	8	10250	1435	.13	.14	.01+
	.430	.200	ARAB INTL.INV.TRD.	24.2	0.00	8	4000	840	.22	.21	.01-
	.580	.220	NATL.MULT.ENG.MANICO	g	0.00	23	28450	6636	.24	.24	-
	.690	.480	MIDEAST PHARM. 90%	E	0.00	6	12500	4750	.49	.48	.01-
	2.160	1.190	UNION TOBACCO 87.5%	13.5	5.90	4	2120	4206	2.10	2.12	.02+
	.320	.190	INDS. ENG.	g	0.00	14	48800	10481	.22	.22	-
	.660	.300	INDS. CERAMIC	7.9	0.00	2	1700	510	.30	.30	-
N	.950	.530	ADVANCED PHARMA.IND.	g	0.00	2	2000	1080	.54	.54	-
	.630	.430	NATL. POULTRY	g	0.00	3	5250	2835	.54	.54	-
N	.950	.320	OPTICALE HEARING CO.	P	0.00	2	200	66	.33	.33	-
+N	1.310	.670	NUTRIDAR	P	0.00	10	16600	10666	.67	.64	.03-
N	1.000	.690	AL-EKBAL PRINTING CO	10.8	10.67	3	1000	710	.71	.71	-
	GRAND TOTAL					105	178420	63148			

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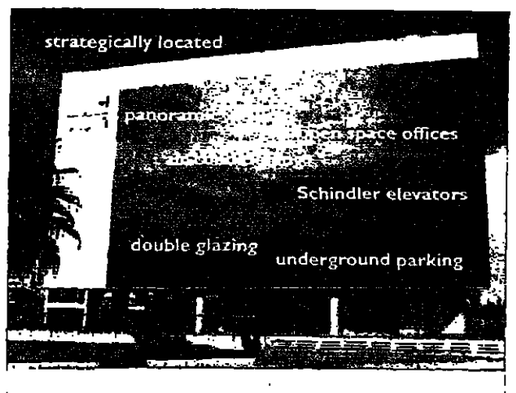

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Pierce wins Kremlin Cup

MOSCOW (AFP) — Self confessed slow starter Mary Pierce picked up sufficient speed to overhaul second seed and World No. 6 Monica Seles 7-6, 6-3 in the final of the Kremlin Cup WTA event here on Sunday.

The Canadian-born French fifth seed was trailing 3-1 in the first set but bounced back to level at 3-3, before going on to secure the tie break 7-2.

Seles missed a golden opportunity to break Pierce's serve early in the second and then lost her rhythm, making a catalogue of unforced errors.

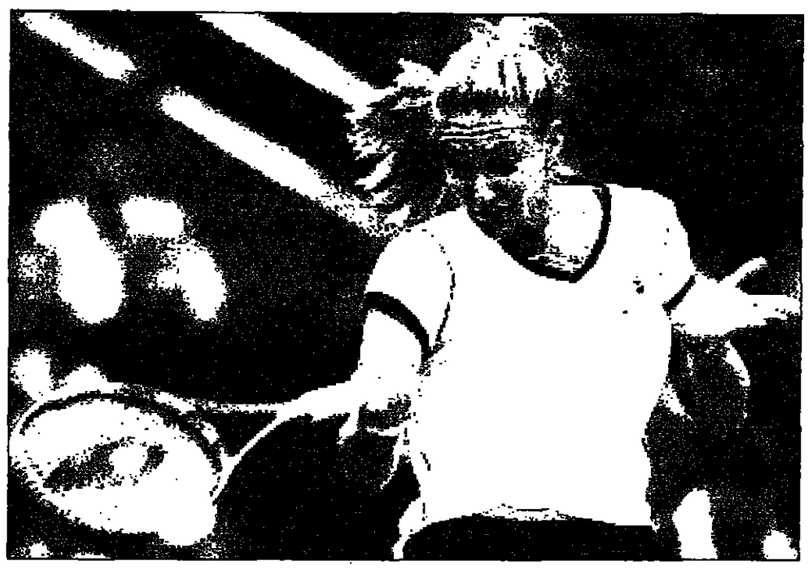
In contrast Pierce put in a precision performance to clinch the winner's purse of $165,000.

"I'm a slow starter," Pierce conceded.

"I was not worried when Monica was leading the score I only tried to play my best," she added.

Pierce, who had seen off a beloe par Venus Williams en route to the final, said she was very satisfied with the result and her win over such an experienced fighter like Seles.

"I couldn't keep my concentration all match through. It was my day-off," Seles said before promising the Moscow public that she would return next year for a new attempt.



French tennis player Mary Pierce receives a service from Venus Williams of the U.S. during the semi-final match of the Kremlin Cup WTA one-million event in Moscow. Pierce won 2-6, 6-6, 6-0 and qualified for the final (AFP photo)

McEnroe wins seniors title

MELBOURNE (AP) — John McEnroe stayed top of the seniors tennis standings Sunday with a controversial victory over Johan Kriek in the final of the Melbourne tournament.

McEnroe added the Melbourne Park event to his win in Sydney a week earlier when he overpowered South African-born Kriek in straight sets 7-5, 6-3.

The crucial break for McEnroe came from a line call at 5-5 in the first set with Kriek on game point. McEnroe's return was called out but he complained and Kriek offered to replay the point.

McEnroe won the point and was then unstoppable.

Kriek said later he wanted to avoid any possible tantrums.

"I can't believe I did that, but you go with the flow," Kriek said. "Instead of having the whole thing blow up and a nasty scene happen here for the next 25 minutes, I thought I'd defuse the situation.

"I feel like on this tour we have to be a little bit different and people seem to like that."

McEnroe extended his winning record over Kriek to 21-7, which includes 12-5 on the ATP Tour and 9-2 on the seniors circuit.

Kriek was playing in his 20th final but slumped to a 2-18 record.

"You not only have to be good to win but you also have to be lucky and I got lucky today," McEnroe said.

Celta top after 3rd successive win

MADRID (R) — Celta Vigo took top place in the Spanish championship on Saturday as a second half double from Juan Sanchez earned them a 2-0 win over Real Zaragoza.

The Spaniard put away his side's only two clear chances to secure a third successive league win for Celta, who overtook Zaragoza and moved level on 13 points with leaders Real Madrid.

Real Madrid have the chance to regain first place when they play Racing Santander in one of nine league games on Sunday.

Celta gained control at the start of the second half, following a scrappy opening period.

Alexandre Mostovoi's looping free kick from the left beat the first defender and Sanchez — the shortest player on the pitch — rose highest to flash a header past keeper Juanmi Garcia.

Zaragoza were then presented with a golden chance as a measured cross from Gustavo Lopez down the left presented Savo Milosevic with an open goal.

The former Aston Villa striker seemed certain to notch his fourth goal of the season but he somehow contrived to lift a shot from no more than three metres out high over the bar.

Sanchez made Zaragoza pay for that glaring error as he shrugged off challenges from the visiting defence to work a clear sight on goal and drill the ball home from the edge of the area.

Zaragoza attempted to come back but they struggled to break down a disciplined Celta defence and when defender Paco Jemez was sent off for a second yellow card with six minutes to go their chances of salvaging something were gone.

Hansa Rostock's Uwe Ehlers (C) in a mid air duel for the ball with Schalke 04's Jiri Nemec (R) during their German Soccer League match in Rostock's Baltic Sea stadium. The match ended in a 2-2 draw. Player in background is unidentified (AFP photo)

Marseille put pressure on rivals Bordeaux

PARIS (R) — Fabrizio Ravanelli and Titi Camara both scored twice against bottom-of-the-table Sochaux to thrust Olympique Marseille to the top of the French first division on Saturday.

A brilliant header by Italian Ravanelli two minutes before the break set his side on course for a 4-0 win.

Camara, who has struggled to settle in recent months, was prominent in the second half.

He hit a superb first goal in the 53rd minute, a fine volley from a long cross by captain Laurent Blanc, and struck his second 17 minutes later from close range. Ravanelli, wrapped up the match with a last minute goal.

Marseille, who have not been beaten since April, are top of the table for the first time this season but Girondins Bordeaux could regain the lead on Sunday when they host Nancy.

"This lead as such is not the most important thing," said Marseille coach Rolland Courbis.

"Like Bordeaux, we have our eyes in the mirror on the teams behind us."

The defeat was all the more painful for Sochaux as it was their last match under Bosnian coach Farouk Hadzibedjic, who had agreed to coach them for the final time in Marseille before quitting.

Courbis was sympathetic to his colleague and criticised clubs for a recent trend of sacking coaches — four of them have been replaced in the first division in recent weeks.

"To sack a coach and ask him to travel with his team for a last match is a first and it's outrageous. Had I not been Marseille coach, I would have liked them to win," he said.

Metz, title contenders last season, finally snatched their first victory of the new campaign with a 1-0 success at home to Monaco.

The team from eastern France had to wait for a penalty on the half-hour for Bruno Rodriguez to score the only goal.

Ambitious Nantes and recovering Paris St Germain had to settle for a goalless draw.

Under new coach Artur Jorge, PSG might not yet be winning but at least they are no longer losing — they have drawn twice since he joined but have also received a red card each time.

This time veteran defender Francis Llacer was sent off in the dying seconds of the match.

"It was our main goal — not to lose and we have achieved that. Now let's hope the hard work will pay off and we'll win again," said PSG president Charles Bietry.

Like Sochaux, Bastia have been changing their coach this week, and player-turned-trainer Laurent Fournier started his new role with a 0-0 draw at home to Strasbourg.

Four-goal Owen makes spectacular Liverpool return

LONDON (AFP) — England star Michael Owen shot down fears that he may be suffering from burn-out with a four-goal blitz as Liverpool returned to winning ways with a 5-1 demolition of Nottingham Forest on Saturday.

The teenage sensation, dropped from the side for the UEFA Cup clash against Valencia in midweek, returned to action in spectacular style as the Reds won their first league game in six outings.

The 18-year-old World Cup star struck after 10, 38 and 77 minutes and also converted a penalty in the 71st to record his first hat-trick at Anfield.

Liverpool's win took them up four places into third place, six points behind leaders Aston Villa who could only draw 1-1 at home to Leicester, and two points behind Manchester United, who were held to the same score at Derby.

Liverpool joint manager Roy Evans was delighted by the display of his £30-million—rated ($49 million) youngster who still lives with his parents. The Reds boss said: "If he comes back at weekends to score four every time we leave him out, maybe we won't play him at all in midweek games! "But although he will get the limelight, it only happens if the team is on song.

"We had got into a situation where we were not playing well. If we play poorly he won't score. "How we play as a team to create chances for him is the key to it all."

Meanwhile, Manchester United were brought back to Earth following their 6-2 Champions' League destruction of Brondby in midweek when they needed an 86th minute goal by substitute Jordi Cruyff to salvage a 1-1 draw at Derby.

United were trailing to Deon Burton's 74th minute strike when United manager Ferguson threw on Cruyff, Jesper Blomqvist, and Paul Scholes with nine minutes left in a desperate final bid for goals.

"I think it was a sensible throw of the dice," said Ferguson. "When you bring on players of quality like them, they're all capable of scoring.

"I think the three of them changed the game. I felt they all did well and of course Cruyff scored the goal."

He added: "I don't think we can use the Brondby game as an excuse for our performance — I don't think that was relevant," he said.

United's draw meant that table-toppers Aston Villa preserved their four-point lead at the top even though they too had to come from behind to salvage a result at home to Midlands rivals Leicester.

Veteran striker Tony Cottee struck for Martin O'Neill's side in the 36th minute, but England defender Ugo Ehoigu maintained Villa's unbeaten record with a 68th-minute equaliser.

O'Neill, who is poised to sign an extension to his contract that will keep him at Filbert Street until 2002, felt his team deserved to win.

"The boys are disappointed that we haven't taken all three points," said the Irishman. "I thought we played some delightful stuff in the first half, and when we got the goal, I genuinely believed we deserved it at that stage."

George Graham celebrated his first win since taking over at Tottenham as the London side beat Rudd Gullit's Newcastle 2-0 courtesy of two goals for Norwegian Steffen Iversen, an early replacement for the injured Les Ferdinand.

Graham said he was delighted to have beaten the revitalised Magpies, but he hit out at referee Graham Barber who he said had an "awful" game after booking six players and sending off Tottenham's Colin Calderwood for a second bookable offence.

"I don't know what's happening to the refereeing in this country. The British game is a passionate game, there is physical contact but I don't think any player reacted violently today.

"Referees rush too quickly to get yellow cards out and then it puts them in a situation where they've got to give the red card. I don't know if full-time referees will work but we've got to do something."

In other matches, the most stirring performance of the day came at Charlton where the Premiership newboys twice came from behind to beat London rivals West Ham 4-2.

England discard Matthew Le Tissier scored one goal and made another as Southampton built on their 1-1 draw at champions Arsenal last week to record their first win of the season, beating Coventry 2-1 at home.

High-flying Middlesbrough missed their chance to keep the pressure on at the top when they had to settle for a 2-2 draw at Wimbledon.

The mid-table battle between Sheffield Wednesday and Everton at Hillsborough resulted in a 0-0 stalemate.

Liverpool's Michael Owen scores against Nottingham Forest during their FA Carling Premiership clash at Anfield stadium. Liverpool won by 5-1 (AFP photo)

Maier leads Austrian sweep

SOLDEN (AFP) — World Cup dominator Hermann Maier picked up where he left off last season, sweeping to a convincing victory in the season-opening men's giant slalom here Sunday.

The 26-year-old "Herminator," the defending overall Cup holder, led a trio of team-mates to the top four positions in a two-leg race which was delayed for more than two hours by bad weather.

Maier finished the Rettenbach glacier course, flagged with 45 gates, in an aggregate time of two minutes 10.74 seconds.

He headed teammates Stefan Eberharter (2:12.34), third-placed Heinz Schilchegger (2:13.08) and fourth-placed Christian Mayer (2:13.13).

Maier shrugged off bad weather, poor visibility and swirling — if unproven — doping-charges to take the victory in front of a partisan home crowd.

Overnight winds at the top of the 3,000 metre-high course blew down the starting hut for a season kick off giant slalom and rain and sleet at the bottom made the day's start a grim one.

The race completed a weekend series which featured a women's GS on Saturday won in a surprise by Norwegian Andrine Flemmen.

The next men's and women's races are set for Park City, Utah, 19-22 October.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠10 ♡94 ◇AJ4 ♣AKJ10872

Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠KQ75 ♡Q1074 ◇AQJ95 ♣Void

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with a weak two-bid in hearts. What action do you take?

Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠AKQ6 ♡K10542 ◇Q6 ♣52

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	Pass	1NT	2♣*
Pass	2♡	Pass	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	?

*takeout for the majors

What action do you take?

Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠AJ87 ♡AK3 ◇976 ♣AJ6

Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

Q. 5 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠K54 ♡K7 ◇AJ8 ♣J10652

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
Pass	1NT	Pass	?

What do you bid now?

Q. 6 - As South vulnerable, you hold:

♠Void ♡J10652 ◇QJ42 ♣A1097

The bidding has proceeded:

NORTH	EAST	SOUTH	WEST
1♣	Pass	1♡	Pass
2♡	Pass	?	

What do you bid now?

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CINEMA TEL:4634144
PHILADELPHIA '2'
George Clooney & Nicole Kidman .. in
THE PEACE MAKER
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:5699238
PLAZA
Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in
SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:5677420
CONCORD
CONCORD "1"
Michael Douglas & Sean Penn .. in
THE GAME
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15,10:30
CONCORD "2"
Robert Redford .. in
UP CLOSE & PERSONAL
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SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

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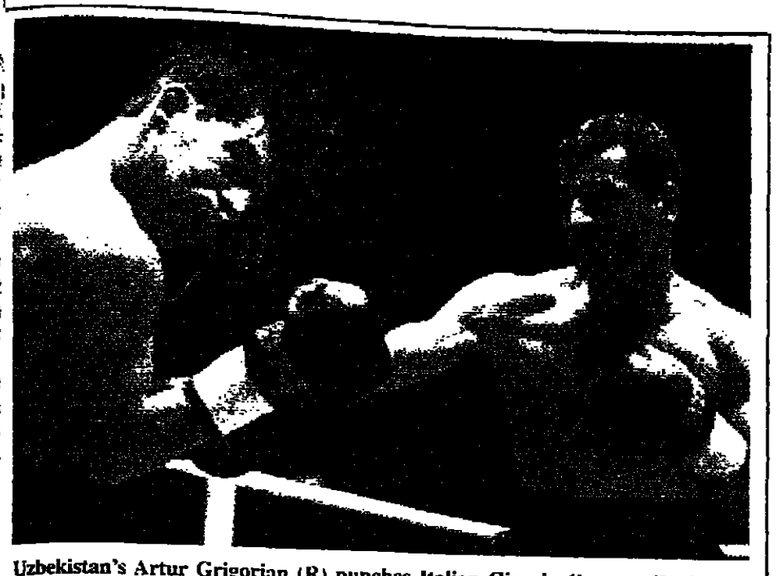

Uzbekistan's Artur Grigorian (R) punches Italian Giorgio Campanella during their WBO world championship lightweight fight in Hamburg. Grigorian defended his title with a technical knockout in the 10th round (AFP photo)

Mets and Piazza agree to record $91m deal

NEW YORK (AFP) — Catcher Mike Piazza has agreed to a seven-year, $91 million contract with the New York Mets, making him the highest-paid player in Major League Baseball history.

The former Los Angeles Dodger's annual salary of $13 million surpasses the old mark of $12.5 million a year by Boston pitcher Pedro Martinez in a six-year, $75 million pact signed in 1997.

The rich deal sets the price for an expensive free agency period that will see new deals for Boston slugger Mo Vaughn, Houston pitcher Randy Johnson, San Diego pitcher Kevin Brown and American League batting champion Bernie Williams of the New York Yankees.

Piazza, 30, was obtained from Florida in May after being sent their by the Dodgers. He was paid $8 million this year in the final season of a two-year contract.

Announcement of a formal contract signing was not expected until Monday.

The Mets had a 15-day window of exclusivity in negotiating with the six-time All-Star catcher, who batted .328 with 32 home runs and 111 runs batted in this season for the Dogers, Marlins and Mets combined.

In New York's failed run for a playoff berth, Piazza batted .378 in September and he has 14 homers and 52 RBI in the final two months of the season. He is a career .333 hitter with 200 homers and 644 RBI.

Piazza had been a Dodger since 1992 but contract talks broke down in April when he rejected a six-year deal worth $84 million amid reports he wanted a deal worth at least $100 million.

He was traded to the Marlins and quickly moved by the losingest club in baseball, which spent much of the time since winning the 1997 World Series shedding high-salary talent to reduce payroll.

Piazza's contract likely signals the Mets will trade Todd Hundley, the Mets former catcher who is due to be paid $5.2 million next season and $6 million in 2000.

Agassi win Czech indoor title

OSTRAVA (Agencies) — World No. 6 Andre Agassi was forced to three tough sets by unseeded Slovak Jan Kroslak on Sunday before emerging with a 6-2 3-6 6-3 victory for the Czech Indoor title.

The 24-year-old Slovak qualifier, ranked 153rd, made Agassi work hard for most games, often frustrating the American with consistent serve-and-volleying in front of a supportive crowd.

But Agassi's trademark intensity, which has led him back into the world top 10 this year from as low as 140th, carried him to the decisive service break in the eighth game of the third set as he pocketed the $137,000 winner's cheque.

"He stepped up his game in the second set... He was winning his serve at will," said a tired Agassi after match. "I had to do anything I could to win."

The Czech success locked up a spot for Agassi in the prestigious eight-man draw for the year-ending ATP World Championship in Hanover later this year.

It was Agassi's fifth title in eight final appearances this year and his first in three ATP finals in October. He lost to Britain's Tim Henman in Basle and Chile's Marcelo Rios at the Grand Slam Cup final in Munich.

Kroslak, whose only tournament successes were at minor stops in China and Israel in 1995 and 1997, said his achievements this week, which included victories over Goran Ivanisevic and Andrei Medvedev, were his best ever.

Agassi, playing his familiar aggressive style, took his first break early to go up 2-1 in what most thought would be a quick match.

But Kroslak saved nine break points in an entertaining 13-deuce, 15-minute fifth game of the first set.

The Slovak, from nearby Bratislava, finally lost the marathon game to fall behind 4-1 but convinced the crowd he could compete with the American superstar.

The former native son of Czechoslovakia before the country split in 1993 responded in the second set by breaking Agassi in the second game as he built a 5-1 lead.

U.S. crowd-pleaser Agassi had reached the final with a 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 semi-final win over Zimbabwe's Wayne Black, while Kroslak qualified after seventh-seeded Swedish opponent Thomas Enqvist withdrew suffering from an ankle injury at 4-3 down in the opening set.

Corretja beats Haas in Lyon final

LYON (AP) — Alex Corretja staged a fine comeback to win his first indoor championship Sunday, saving a match point before beating Tommy Haas 2-6, 7-6 (8-5), 6-1 at the $750,000 Lyon Grand Prix.

After easily grabbing the first set, unseeded Haas was 6-5 ahead in the second set tiebreak against Spain's Corretja, the No. 4 seed here and world number seven.

But Corretja blasted a backhand past Haas at the net to save the match, before winning the tiebreak 8-6.

The match turned in the Spaniard's favor in the first game of the final set, when he got a lucky deflection off the net to break service.

Corretja is the first Spaniard to win an indoor championship since Manuel Orantes' victory at the Houston Masters back in 1976.

Faisali-Qadissieh match halted after disputed goal

Riot police stop assault on referees

By a Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The 13th week of the Premier League Championship got off to the sour start when the match between leaders Al Faisali and Al Qadissieh was halted following a disputed goal by Al Faisali which was ruled out by the referee.

According to eyewitnesses, the linesman ruled an 81st minute goal offside thus cancelling the match's sole goal which would have given Al Faisali a much-needed win to hang on to their current mere two-point lead over rivals Al Wihdat.

The referee decided to halt the match after Al Faisali Club Chairman Sultan Al Udwan pulled his team out, thus stopping the match with less than 10 minutes left in the second half.

As the game was stopped, the issue was further complicated when the referees were assaulted while leaving the pitch, prompting riot police to interfere and stop the brawl.

The Jordan Football Association (JFA) will Monday hold a meeting to review the referees' report and decide the outcome of the match.

In other matches of the country's leading soccer event, Al Ramtha scored a 4-0 win over Al Ahli who seem to be going down the standings and are currently in the last-two relegation zone.

Kufrsoum moved from last to eight after a 4-2 win over Shabab Al Hussein ending a three-week drought.

The top ten teams are playing two matches a week to end the fourth and last of the season's soccer competitions on Nov. 20.

Al Wihdat are looking for their 5th consecutive Premier League title after winning the season-opening fourth Cup Winners' Cup.

Al Faisali took the second of the season's four soccer championships when they won their record 10th Jordan Cup.

Kufrsoum, playing in the prestigious league for the third year running, made history when they clinched their first ever major title by beating Al Hussein to win the country's third title — the Jordan Football Association (JFA) Shield.

Al Wihdat, who have won the Cup and Cup Winners Cup in the last two years and the Premier League in the last four.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Faisali*	12	11	-	1	34	7	33
Wihdat	12	10	1	1	30	10	31
Ramtha	13	5	4	4	17	15	19
Hussein	12	5	2	5	10	8	17
Qadissieh*	12	4	4	4	17	18	16
S. Al Hussein	13	3	5	5	14	22	14
Arabi	12	3	3	6	15	24	12
Kufrsoum	13	2	5	6	12	25	11
Ahli	13	2	3	8	10	21	9
Jazireh	12	2	3	7	7	16	9

** Standing pending Monday's JFA decision*

Kathema, Rayyan draw in clash of favourites

Ahli eye third place after beating Salt

By Roufan Nahhas

AMMAN — Kuwait's Kathema held Qatar's Rayyan to a 28-28 (13-12) draw Sunday in what proved to be the most exciting match of the 1st Asian League Champions Handball Tournament which concludes Tuesday at the Sports Palace.

The tie will provide handball fans another exciting day as the tournament champions will be decided after Tuesdays matches.

Kathema and Al Rayyan currently top the standings Kathema leading on goal difference.

However, the Kuwaiti team have an upcoming difficult match against Iran's Zobohan compared to Al Rayyan's relatively easier match against Jordan's Al Salt in their last match Tuesday.

The experienced team of players on Kathema's lineup gave their opponents a hard time Sunday depending on left-handed Ali Murad.

Qatar's Rayyan looked weak in defence with some improvement towards the end of the first half.

Kathema did not give their opponents a chance and took the first half with a 13-12 win.

But the situation took another turn for Al Rayyan who returned with more power and determination and succeeded in taking the lead.

Kathema, struggled to keep their balance and were saved thanks to their goalkeeper Adel Abad.

The two teams surrendered for a 28-28 tie in the last seconds which witnessed some rough play from both teams.

In an earlier match, Jordan's Al Ahli showed their best in their match against Al Salt with a 25-22 win.

Only five teams are taking part in the Oct. 20-27 event after China's Army team and UAE's Al Shareqah declined. The competing teams are Jordan's Al Salt and Al Ahli, Iran's Zobohan Asfahan, Qatar's Al Rayyan and Kuwait's Kathema.

The teams will have a rest on Monday and the tournament concludes Tuesday.

Schedule of matches for Tuesday

Zobohan vs. Kathema	4:00 p.m.
Rayyan vs. Salt	6:15 p.m.

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Conditions of sale:

Sale is conducted by sealed bid.
All property is sold on as-is, where-is, non-returnable basis for cash payment without refund or warranty.
Bid forms and list of lots will be available at time of sale.
All items will be available for inspection at sale time.
A deposit of 20% of the total bid is required at time of bid in cash JD only. This is strictly enforced.
All bids must be deposited in lock box by 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 27.
All bidders will be notified and deposit refunded to unsuccessful bidders by Wednesday-Thursday, October 28-29.
All property must be paid for and removed by COB Thursday, October 29.
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The closing date for submitting bids is 12:00 hours local time Thursday 14th January, 1999.

Sameh Madani
Managing Director

Palestinian police kill Fateh activist in Ramallah

RAMALLAH (Agencies) — A Palestinian teenager died on Sunday after being shot by Palestinian police during a demonstration of the mainstream Fateh movement in this West Bank town, his family said.

Wasim Tarifi, 17, was hit in the head by two bullets when an argument erupted between activists from Yasser Arafat's Fateh movement and Palestinian security officers who opened fire with live ammunition.

He was taken to hospital in a critical condition and later died of his wounds.

Hundreds of Fateh members were demonstrating to demand that the Palestinian policemen who raided a Fateh office Saturday night be put on trial. The policemen raided the office to seize unlicensed weapons. That was among tough new security measures Arafat agreed to at last week's U.S. summit.

Following the incident local merchants in Ramallah closed down their shops as demonstrators burned tyres and chanted slogans against the Palestinian police.

Fateh also called a general strike for Monday to demand that Tarifi's killers be brought to justice.

Marwan Barghouti, secretary general of the Fateh movement in the West Bank, met with the governor of Ramallah, Moustafa Issa, and the commander of the Palestinian national security force, General Ismail Jaber.

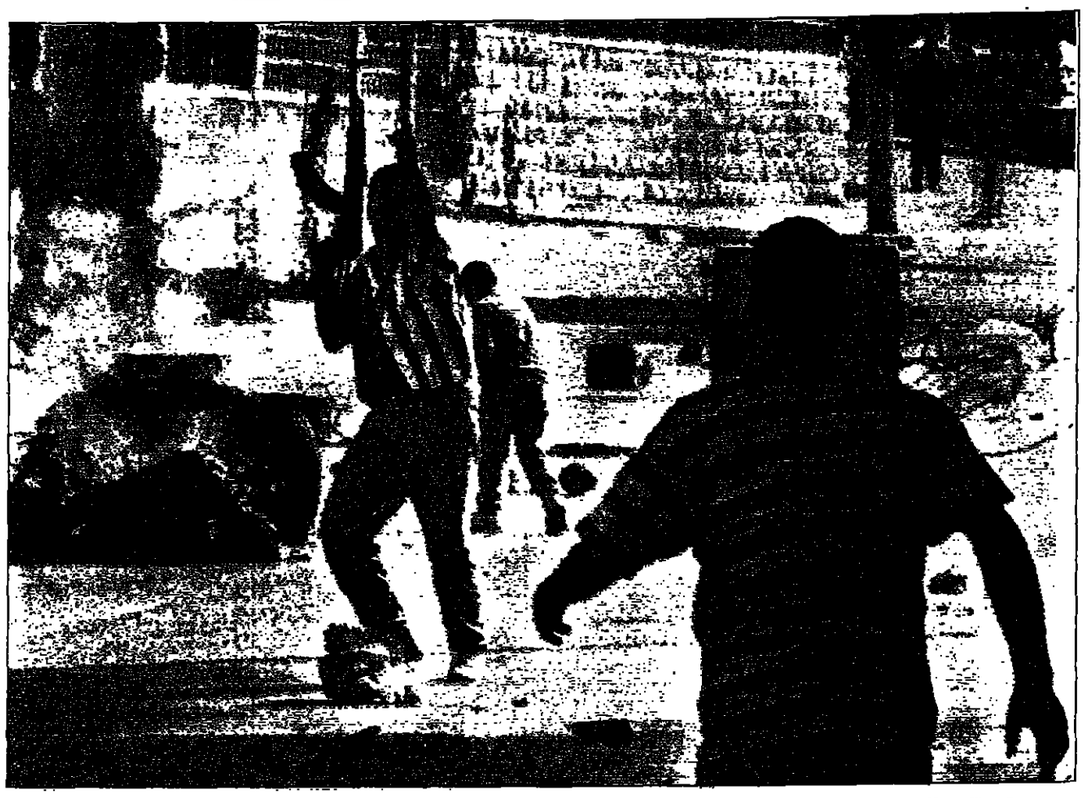
After the meeting Barghouti told reporters that the Palestinian National Authority had arrested the policemen who raided the Fateh office and that unspecified measures would be taken against them.

The fighting in the centre of the West Bank town of Ramallah broke out as Barghouti was addressing a group of about 100 supporters outside the Palestinian National Authority headquarters and the offices of the governor.

Some of the Fateh activists picked up stones and hurled them over a fence into the compound and at plain-clothes intelligence agents who were watching the gathering from the sidelines, witnesses said.

Intelligence agents hurled rocks back at the crowd. But then some of the security agents fired from the second- and third-floor windows, with some of the gunfire directed into the crowd. About the same time, armed Fateh members arrived on the scene, firing shots into the air.

Two men were shot, including Tarifi. That silenced the gunfire on both sides, and leaders from both sides quickly withdrew for a meeting.



Palestinian demonstrators from Fateh movement clash with Palestinian police on Sunday in the West Bank town of Ramallah, to demand that the Palestinian policemen who raided a Fateh office the previous night be put on trial (AFP photo)

Peace treaty anniversary far from festive

(Continued from page 1)

But for some Jordanians, the Wye agreement may not signal such a major shift. Grown accustomed to Netanyahu's stated commitment to the peace process, but his continued controversial policies and reluctance to move ahead with the Palestinian-Israeli track, many Jordanians remain sceptical that genuine peace, let alone its dividends, will ever see the light of day.

The recent Palestinian-Israeli deal, sealed after His Majesty King Hussein's direct intervention, and calling for a gradual Israeli troop withdrawal from 13.1 per cent of the West Bank in return for Palestinian security concessions, has been welcomed officially in Jordan.

"Wye helps. Honest implementation of Wye would help too. Especially in light of the fact that final status issues will begin very soon," says an official.

But a senior government official warns against reading too much into the agreement and says that Jordan will be closely watching its implementation, which many analysts predict will be no easy task.

The fragile element of trust between Jordan and Israel may have been lost, even at the highest levels, say officials. The November 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, considered to be a "peace partner" of King Hussein, has left a vacuum.

In addition, the Mossad's botched assassination attempt on Hamas Politburo Chief Khaled Misha'al in Amman last year sunk official bilateral ties to their lowest point, with the Kingdom severing security cooperation with Israel for several months.

But regardless of the standstill in the peace process, especially on the Palestinian track, and reservations towards the policies of the Netanyahu government, Jordan remains reluctant to minimise its ties with Israel in line with mounting popular calls for a halt to normalisation on the official level.

Last month the newly appointed government of Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh gained an overwhelming vote-of-confidence in the 80-seat Lower House of Parliament, but only after 53 deputies called for a halt to normalisation with the Jewish state.

The deputies, who included prominent politicians and former ministers involved in various stages of peace-making with Israel, gave the government the confidence vote, but said it would be up for review in six months.

Tarawneh and others countered by saying that normalisation is part and parcel of the peace treaty and that relations with Israel can be utilised for the benefit of other Arab tracks.

"We are being pushed by people to increase trade levels with the West Bank, which we all know is controlled by Israel. How can Jordan do this without contacting the Israelis, meeting with them, and talking to them?" says an official. "If this is normalisation then so be it."

"Who are the main beneficiaries of this anyway?" the official asks. "The Jordanians and Palestinians, so we must advance normalisation."

Israel's ambassador to Jordan, Oded Eran, also insists that there is no escaping normalisation. "Peace between neighbours, enemies in the past, cannot be achieved only by formal implementation of (articles in the peace treaty). Normalisation is a wider process."

Eran recognises that this is an arduous task as both sides have people who feel victimised, but says that normalisation does not mean forgetting the past or giving up rights or claims.

Jordanian officials complain, however, that Israel is not doing its part to implement the peace treaty and its annexes to make normalisation more attractive to Jordanians. "If there is lack of cooperation this is because Israel is not forthcoming, not because Jordan is distancing itself," says one official.

Officials site lack of progress on various bilateral agreements such as the Aqaba-Eilat airport pilot project, and insist that Israel's iron grip on the Palestinian economy must be eased to allow Jordan's entry into the West Bank market.

While many in the political elite and intellectuals maintain that Jordan has achieved little from its ties with Israel to compensate for the increasingly strained relations with Arab countries such as Syria, officials boast several successes.

They list the $700 million debt forgiveness from the U.S., $225 million in annual U.S. aid, an increase in the Kingdom's water supply, and the establishment of the Qualified Industrial Zone in Irbid, which is a one-way free trade zone with the U.S.

"Yes, all this is worth the domestic and regional opposition," insists an official.

Implementation of the Wye accord may or may not change the minds of Jordanians, some of whom remain ideologically opposed to peace with Israel, but progress will surely lessen the mounting pressure on the government and those in the peace camp who are finding few adherents when they talk about the fruits of peace.

PNA arrests prominent Muslim cleric after interview

NABLUS (R) — Palestinian National Authority (PNA) police arrested a prominent Muslim cleric on Saturday after he gave a television interview criticising the new Israeli-Palestinian interim peace deal, his wife said on Sunday.

Sheikh Hamed Al Bitawi, in his 60s, is a preacher with Islamist leanings also employed by the PNA's Waqf and Islamic Affairs Ministry.

Bitawi's arrest was the second attempt in as many days by the PNA to mute opposition to the new deal struck by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu in the United States.

Palestinian police detained 11 reporters at the Gaza home of the founder of the Islamist Hamas group, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin on Friday.

A PNA official said statements by Yassin went against Palestinian policy and ran contrary to the peace deal hammered out by Arafat and Netanyahu at a marathon nine-day summit.

The new interim peace deal requires Arafat to crack down on Hamas and other activist groups in return for an Israeli pullback from more of the West Bank.

Bitawi, an opponent of Arafat's peace overtures with Israel, has often preached at occupied Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine. He was the head of the Sharia appeals court, the highest Islamic court in the West Bank, and head of the union of Palestinian Islamic clerics.

His wife said a Palestinian general intelligence officer came to their home after Bitawi had given an interview to the Qatari Al Jazeera satellite television channel.

"They took him to Nablus prison and called us to say there is no need to wait. After half an hour they told us the sheikh was under arrest," his wife told Reuters.

"The Israelis allow settlers to express their opposition, why can't we?" she asked.

Jewish settlers blocked roads in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, angrily protesting at an Israeli peace deal giving Palestinians a further 13 per cent of the territory.

Bitawi was jailed several times by Israel, before Nablus came under Palestinian control according to interim peace deals.

The cleric was deported by Israel along with hundreds of Islamists to southern Lebanon in 1992.

His wife said Bitawi suffered from health problems.

Palestinian journalists lift strike

GAZA (R) — Journalists in the Palestinian-ruled Gaza Strip said on Sunday that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) had apologised for the detention by police of 11 reporters at the home of the founder of the Islamist group Hamas.

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate said it had ended a strike called on Saturday over the incident after receiving assurances from a senior PNA official, Tayeb Abdul Rahim, that press freedoms would be observed.

"Tayeb Abdul Rahim reaffirmed that press freedom was guaranteed according to the law and in a way that does not go against national interests," the syndicate said in a statement.

"He apologised for the wrong committed against journalists' rights," the statement added.

Abdul Rahim's office was not available for comment.

The 11 journalists were detained as they left the Gaza home of Hamas founder Sheikh Ahmad Yassin on Friday after seeking his reaction to the signing in Washington of a new Israeli-Palestinian interim peace deal.

They were taken to a police station and released two hours later following confiscation of video and audio cassettes and photographic film.

The new deal requires Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to crack down on Hamas and other activists groups in return for an Israeli pullback from more of the West Bank.

The armed wing of Hamas has killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings and is outlawed by PNA, but Hamas itself is a legal organisation.

'One Iraq child dies every nine minutes due to sanctions'

BAGHDAD (R) — One Iraqi child dies every nine minutes due to the stringent U.N. economic sanctions clamped on the country, an Iraqi newspaper said on Sunday.

Al Musawir Al Arabi weekly quoted statistics that showed the death rate among children from diarrhoea had increased elevenfold since August 1990 while the death rate from pneumonia rose ten-fold. Deaths due to malnutrition increased 24 times during the same period, it said.

"There are 128 deaths for every 1,000 children below five years while infant mortality rate increased into 92.7 for every 1,000 birth-cases," the paper said.

"Statistics prepared by specialised committees of the ministries of health and labour disclosed that one child dies every nine minutes due to the unjust sanctions," it added. The newspaper said the acute shortage of medicine and food had a tremendous impact on childhood in Iraq. It said sanctions had also had a big influence on weight of newborns.

Births at a weight below 2.5 kg jumped to 23.2 per cent from only 4.5 per cent in 1997. Communicable diseases also rocketed to 16.82 per cent on 1997 from three per cent on 1989.

Iran conservatives secure control of clerical body

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's conservatives secured control of a powerful clerical assembly which alone can name and dismiss the Islamic Republic's supreme leader, final election results showed on Sunday.

Returns from Friday's elections in Iran's 28 provinces, carried by state television, showed candidates backed by the Association of Militant Clergy, the leading right faction, with 42 seats in the 86-member assembly of Experts.

Another 21 were backed jointly by the Association and Iran's leading centrist party, although they are widely recognised as conservatives, albeit less absolutist.

Some 23 other seats went to candidates identified as independents or affiliated with the moderates.

The conservative establishment celebrated the results, and what it said was a strong turnout, as a victory for Iran's Islamic system.

The figures carried by state media indicated that 46 per cent of 39 million eligible voters took part. The last assembly polls in 1990 drew a 37 per cent turnout. There were no official participation figures for last Friday's election.

Resalat daily, a conservative bastion, hailed the vote as an act of divine love.

"What drew people to the polls was love, love toward the system... and the revolution. The warmth of love toward the system and its leadership could not be hidden," it said in a commentary.

With conservatives holding a dominant advantage on the candidate lists, progressive personalities had hinted at a boycott to protest a lack of choice from among supporters of moderate President Mohammad Khatami.

But the latest returns appeared to show only Tehran, a hotbed of pro-Khatami sentiment, failed to turn out in strength.

Results from the capital, by far Iran's biggest city, showed just one outright leftist cleric has secured a seat on the Assembly of Experts.

The assembly, comprised of Muslim theologians, has the authority to supervise Iran's supreme leader, whose temporal powers greatly exceed those of the elected Khatami. The current supreme leader is Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, widely considered close to hardliners and conservatives.

The elections were seen as sensitive because they came after challenges to Khamenei's authority by critics ranging from moderate students to dissidents.

Progressive theologians and their supporters had earlier denounced the vetting of candidates, which saw a field of about 400 whittled down to 161 finalists — some 130 from the conservative camp. No women made the final cut.

Most of those barred by a conservative-run screening body were pro-Khatami candidates.

Salam newspaper, close to pro-Khatami reformist clerics, said democratic rights had been pre-empted by conservatives.

A commentary said voters had turned out only from a sense of responsibility to the Islamic system, not out of genuine democratic sentiment.

President Khatami, who rode a crest of reformist "people power" to his landslide victory, joined the chorus of protest but urged voters to take part all the same.

He said there were larger numbers of competent figures than those who appeared on the list of candidates but said there was still relative diversity on the ballot.

Yemen expels 21,000 illegal foreign workers

DOHA (AFP) — Yemen's Interior Minister Hussain Mohammad Arab on Sunday said his country had expelled 21,000 illegal foreign workers since 1994, in an interview with Qatar's Al Raya daily.

"Since the summer of 1994, we have asked all illegal residents to regularise their situation. Since then, we have expelled 21,000 illegal foreign workers," Arab said.

Diplomatic sources have said many of those expelled were Afghan war veterans, including Egyptians, Algerians, Libyans and Tunisians.

Arab added that "68 people implicated in sabotage in the Aden province have been arrested. All these people admitted receiving funding to carry out these acts of sabotage."

The minister did not elaborate on who paid the money, except to say it was "those who do not accept democracy in Yemen."

On Wednesday, a Syrian with a Spanish passport was condemned to death in Aden for plotting with an unnamed foreign country to carry out bomb attacks in Yemen.

Nabil Nanakli Kasebati received the death sentence as the ring-leader of a group which carried out several bombings, mostly in the port city of Aden, capital of former South Yemen.

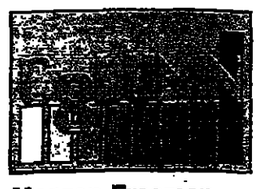
Court officials said 21 others were sentenced to jail terms of between 18 months and four years, while five defendants were acquitted.

Kasebati said in court in December 1997 he had been paid $150,000 by Saudi intelligence to kill Abdul Karim Al Iriyani, then Yemen's foreign minister, in a car bombing. He was arrested before the attack.

Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz has denied any Saudi involvement in a plot to kill Iriyani, who is now prime minister.

Yemeni authorities have blamed southern leaders who fled after a 1994 north-south civil war for a spate of bomb attacks and accused Saudi Arabia of supporting the exiles.

The country was unified in May 1990.



Morgan Freeman could play Mandela

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — U.S. film star Morgan Freeman could land the role of Nelson Mandela in the epic $23 million film about the South African president's life, the Sunday Times newspaper reported. The weekly said producer Anant Singh recently met Freeman in the United States to discuss the possibility of his playing the older version of Mandela in the film "Long Walk to Freedom." After unsuccessfully searching for one actor to trace Mandela's life, Singh said he was considering casting four people in the role.

First wedding on disputed Gulf islands

MANAMA (AFP) — An expatriate couple have become the first people to tie the knot on the Hawar islands, whose ownership is fiercely disputed by Bahrain and Qatar, newspapers said Sunday. David Brown and Joanne Wilkinson were joined by a hundred guests as they became the first couple to claim the islands as the venue for their wedding, the English-language Bahrain Tribune said. The wedding came amid a war of words between Bahrain and its neighbour Qatar over the ownership of the largely uninhabited islands.

Record-breaking climber gets hero's welcome

KATHMANDU (AFP) — About 1,000 people turned out Sunday to welcome home Nepali climber Kaji Sherpa who set a new world record for scaling Mount Everest without using bottled oxygen. Friends and admirers joined his family and officials bearing flowers and garlands at Tribhuvan International Airport to welcome Kaji after he scaled the world's highest peak in just 20 hours 24 minutes. Nepalese Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation Yam Lal Kandel and the ministry secretary, Dipendra Purush Dhakal, were also at the hero's welcome for Kaji as he descended from a helicopter.

80-year-old woman 'marries' dead man

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — An 80-year-old South African woman has "married" a man who died 25 years ago, the City Press newspaper reported Sunday. In the unusual ceremony at Vaalbank east of Pretoria, Zibi Masanabo married the father of her children, Isaac Masanabo, who died in 1973. "Isaac may be dead but he is still the best man for me," Masanabo told the weekly after the wedding. The couple had seven children together since 1940, but were never legally married, although Isaac Masanabo had paid his lover's family 10 out of the 12 cows agreed for her hand.

Controversial mayor part of school curriculum

WASHINGTON (R) — Eight years ago Marion Barry was in jail, the disgraced mayor of the nation's capital, caught by the FBI smoking crack cocaine. Last week, his legacy became part of the Washington, D.C. school curriculum. Redemption must now seem complete for the 62-year-old civil rights activist and four-term mayor whose political career has fascinated and horrified the city's residents for two decades. D.C. Superintendent of Schools Arlene Ackerman has agreed to allow teachers to opt for lesson plans supplied by Barry's supporters detailing his career.